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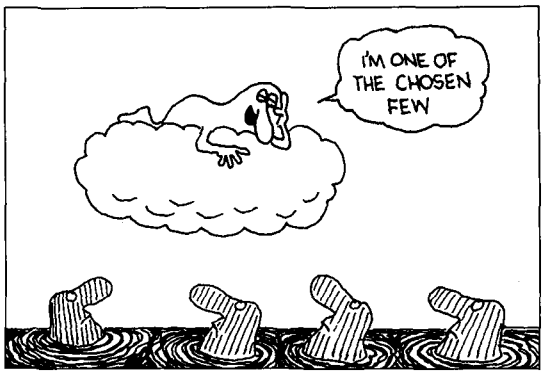

COVER STORY

37 ***Riding High***
On a three-state jaunt with the Clinton campaign, **Kate O'Beirne** meets an electorate enthused by promises from the Commander-in-Chief about a future of big government.

ARTICLES

21 ***Election Scene***
Republicans are fighting hard on the Western front, says **Rich Lowry**. . . . **Karina Rollins** audits the U.S. Taxpayers Party.

26 ***On the Scene***
Andrew Stuttaford is sent to the Gulag. . . . **Richard Brookhiser** testifies for medical marijuana. . . . **James Bowman** sees holes in the AIDS quilt.

32 ***Is Patriarchy Inevitable?***
Steven Goldberg explains why men rule. . . . **Gösta Wranglén** counts Nobel prizes.

40 ***California Dreaming***
Patrick Reddy remembers the Reagan Coalition. . . . **Karen Saranita** warns that the electoral process has been run down by the Motor Voter act.

44 ***Honorable Mention***
Barbara Lerner stands up for Bob Dole. . . . **Kellyanne Fitzpatrick** says that young voters respond to old issues.

48 ***Controversy***
Doris Meissner denies that the INS is swearing in citizens for political purposes. . . . **Thomas McArdle** responds.

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BOOKS, ARTS & MANNERS

52 Despite a modest drop in violent crime, **Christie Davies** predicts more mayhem ahead. What's behind American violence? Ask William J. Bennett, John J. DiIulio, and John P. Walters, authors of *Body Count: Moral Poverty . . . and the How to Win America's War against Crime and Drugs*; plus George L. Kelling and Catherine M. Coles's *Fixing Broken Windows*, Nathaniel J. Pallone and James J. Hennessy's *Tinder-Box Criminal Aggression*, and Richard Wrangham and Dale Peterson's *Demonic Males*. . . . In *Slouching towards Gomorrah*, Robert Bork reviews all fronts in the culture war. **William C. Porth** emerges shell-shocked. . . . Despite the efforts of Dr. Marcia Angell, author of *Science on Trial*, America still hasn't recovered from the breast-implant scare, reports **Walter Olson**. . . . After reading Joan Didion's *The Last Thing He Wanted*, **James Bowman** wants to know, What was all that about? . . . **John Simon** survives *Surviving Picasso* and makes a narrow escape from *Basquiat*. . . . **Linda Bridges** notes that, in most everything, just as good—isn't.

68 ***Misanthrope's Corner***
Florence King thinks the American dream is funny.

SECTION

2 ***Letters***
4 ***From the Editor***
5 ***For the Record***
6 ***The Week***
29 ***Gekko***
49 ***Letter from Al***
50 hel
62 ***Books in Brief***
65 ***Trans-O-Gram***
66 ***On the Right***

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LETTERS

The Novelist of Normalcy

The annoying and subversive John Simon misunderstands Jane Austen and her appeal ["*Emma* without Emma," Oct. 14]. Her current success in the movies ("cinema"—for heaven's sake!) is not due to the endings of her stories in which the heroine "lives happily ever after." This formula of a happy ending is hardly unique to Jane Austen, either among novels then or among films today. Her appeal, current and past—but especially current—is due instead, I think, to the fact that she is the novelist of normalcy and disciplined behavior. *That* is a welcome change from the modern life that surrounds and stifles us.

Piroska M. Haywood
West Lafayette, Ind.

Waxing Philosophical?

I thank Karina Rollins for covering the Libertarian Party convention ["Scenes from Conventional Life," Sept. 16], but she spent two thirds of her article on philosophical questions of no relevance to today's politics. There are millions of conservatives who recognize that if Bob Dole miraculously wins the election, government will still get bigger. I've talked with many of them in over four hundred appearances on talk radio. They are looking for a way to register a vote for genuinely smaller government. My campaign offers that alternative—in contrast to Bob Dole's "unspecified cuts" and rearranging of the tax burden of a $1.6 trillion government. It's too bad Miss Rollins didn't focus on the specifics of my program:

1) We wean people off federal dependency by giving them something significant in return. Repeal the income tax and replace it with nothing—by reducing the Federal Government to its constitutional limits. National defense and the federal judiciary can be financed by the revenues already being collected from tariffs and excise taxes—as they were before 1913.

2) We end the recurring Social Security crises by getting the Federal Government out of it. Sell federal assets to buy private lifetime annuities for those dependent on Social Security—so they will have guaranteed contracts instead of Congressional promises, and the rest of us will be free forever from the 15 per cent Social Security tax, which is but money down the drain.

3) We reduce crime—without trampling further on the Bill of Rights—by ending the insane War on Drugs. This will eliminate the black market in drugs that fosters muggers trying to support $100-a-day habits, pushers in schoolyards, and gang wars.

It would have been nice to see these issues discussed, instead of dwelling on abstract philosophy. Or does NATIONAL REVIEW intend to engage Bob Dole and Bill Clinton in discussions on the role of government in a free society?

Harry Browne
Libertarian candidate for President
Washington, D.C.

Mr. Browne rightly leaves no stone unturned when criticizing the shortcomings of the two major candidates, so he can hardly complain about a deeper look at his own. —KR

Education Woes

Your annual "Back to School" issue [Sept. 30] was, again, right on target. As a professor of education I have witnessed a fundamental change in the education field. Twenty years ago, instructional methods and educational policy could be debated (and accepted or discarded) based on their merit (i.e., did they enhance student academic performance?). Today, education is seen as a vehicle for social change rather than as a field to promote academic excellence, and educational policies have evolved into belief systems based on this social-reformation perspective.

Ill-advised methods and policies such as multiculturalism, inclusion, cooperative education, and whole-language reading instruction are foisted on public schools without debate. Those who dare question these approaches are branded insensitive, racist, or uninformed for the audacity of employing objectivism and questioning the self-appointed educational elite.

Much current educational research is directed at finding *alternative* assessment methods, guaranteed to show educational progress despite declining academic performance. From my vantage point, I *still* cannot see the emperor's new clothes.

G. Franklin Elrod
Starkville, Miss.

As a second-year law student, I was pleased (and saddened) to read John O. McGinnis's "Legal Monopoly." The sad truth that almost every second- and third-year law student knows is that after the required first-year courses there is very little that a student could learn better in a classroom than he could working under the tutelage of a practicing attorney, as Mr. McGinnis suggests.

It is obvious why some professors prefer to teach instead of practicing. My criminal-law professor is a walking example of the adage, "Those who can, do; those who can't, teach." I will always remember two statements he made, in all sincerity, to our class: one, that "there are two kinds of judges in Texas; objective judges and conservative judges," and two, "the U.S. criminal-justice system has a lot it could learn from the criminal-justice systems of China and the Soviet Union." And to think that I will be in debt for almost $80 thousand to support this drivel.

Christopher Burnett
San Antonio, Tex.

You've shed light on many dismaying aspects of America's education system, but failed to cite the single most devastating manifestation of the system's failure—the continuing popularity of William Jefferson Clinton.

Andrew B. Burns
Stamford, Conn.

Dinner Talk

I was sitting down to dinner with liberals. When the conversation turned to New York's mayor there was a predictable nodding of heads and tacit tongue clucking; we all know about *him*, we need not be troubled to make any cogent arguments.

After reading William E. Simon's "Good for Business" [Sept. 16] I feel like I am at dinner with conservatives, and there is a predictable tongue clucking over certain issues, because no one *here* questions them. "Business is under attack again. Companies seeking to improve their productivity are criticized for laying off employees . . ." Cluck, cluck, cluck . . . Is it a *good* to lay off employees? At best, laying off an employee is a necessary evil. A company may have a right to lay off whomever it chooses, but individuals have a right to criticize this, and the resulting moral hit the company takes can rightfully become part of the corporate image. The argument implied by Simon seems to be that companies should be able to do deeds that have a mix of good and bad consequences, take credit for the good, but discount the bad.

The man of character who shoots the stray does not delude himself that choirs of angels sing in joy therefore, rather that they cry with him over the necessary evil. But if he develops a taste for shooting things . . .

Edward R. Green
New York, N.Y.

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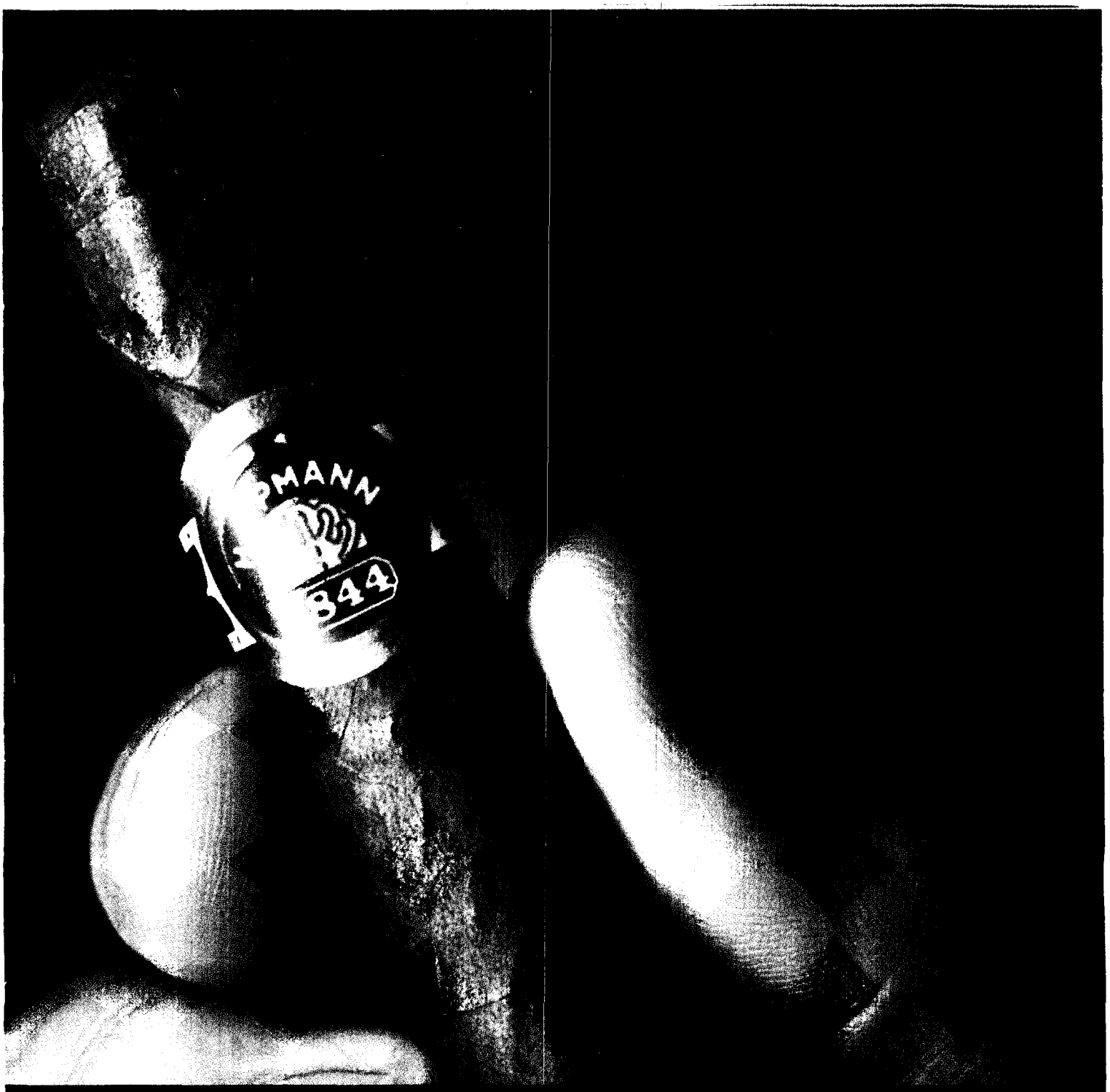

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FROM THE EDITOR

Against the Odds

■ Twenty points down in the polls with only three weeks to go, Bob Dole has accepted NATIONAL REVIEW's advice and is campaigning on issues like racial preferences and immigration.

That advice has been given at regular intervals in 1996. Had it been heeded earlier, might not Mr. Dole be ahead?

It is now late in the day, and he has not prepared public opinion for such controversy. Nor is he campaigning very well. On these issues, he seems more than usually tongue-tied and even guilty.

He may *feel* guilty. On social issues from quotas to family values, many Republicans, unaware of the strong moral arguments for the conservative view, have internalized the liberal one.

Hence, when they are accused of exploiting racism or stigmatizing gays, they secretly agree with their accusers and look shifty and unconvincing.

The last redoubt of liberalism is the mind of a Washington conservative.

■ Mr. Dole is devoting this late campaign to California. *NR* gave *that* advice a month ago. Quick service.

Sure, nowhere looks terrific for the GOP. But, as psephologist Pat Reddy points out on page 40, California looks better than anywhere else. The GOP's issues are "hot" there, and it has a bundle of electoral-college votes.

So our final throw. As Karen Saranita points out (page 42), California is likely to be rife in fraudulent voting, especially (and ironically) by illegal immigrants.

Just conceivably, this might yield the crucial margin of failure for the California strategy—so for the election. Will the GOP blow the whistle on such fraud? Or hold back, fearing charges of racism, nativism, etc.?

If they refrain, they will have invented a new definition of "moderate"—someone losing an election to a liberal. Well, maybe not invented, but confirmed.

■ Finding something nice to write about the *New York Times* is a rare pleasure, so I shall indulge it to the full. The special issue of the *New York Times Book Review*, which reprints some of its most interesting/significant/curious reviews of the last century, is a delight.

A strip of illustrations and factoids under each page points out landmarks and curiosities as they occur, e.g., "1904. James Joyce and Nora Barnacle have their first date on June 16 (Bloomsday). When Joyce's father hears her last name, he says 'She'll never leave him.'"

And the *Review*'s first reactions, until feminism laid its cold philistine hand on reviewing in the 1970s, are always (and variously) fascinating. Its judgment of *Ulysses* shows uncanny literary prescience, and that of Hitler's *Mein Kampf* an odd mixture of getting a lot wrong and the main point triumphantly right.

But has its current editor, Charles McGrath, hidden away his predecessors' skeletons in some closet? Not so. "Oops" records some *Times*'s misjudgments over the years. And here Mr. McGrath finally falters; for it contains some of the sharpest observations in the collection.

Of Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*: "It is superficial to blame the 'culture' and its handmaidens, women's magazines, as she does. What is to stop a woman who is interested in national and international affairs from reading magazines that deal with those subjects?"

Of *Howard's End* by the author of (subsequently) *Two Cheers for Democracy*: "As a social philosopher, evidently, Mr. Edward M. Forster has not arrived at any very positive convictions."

And, finally, of Willa Cather's *O Pioneers!*: "Possibly some might call it a feminist novel, for the two heroines are stronger, cleverer, and better balanced than their husbands and brothers—but we are sure Miss Cather had nothing so inartistic in mind."

Has Mr. McGrath's subconscious played him for a sucker, sneaking in these splendidly heterodox sentiments under the guise of howlers? If so, I for one am delighted he has gotten in touch with his feelings.

—JOHN O'SULLIVAN

NATIONAL REVIEW

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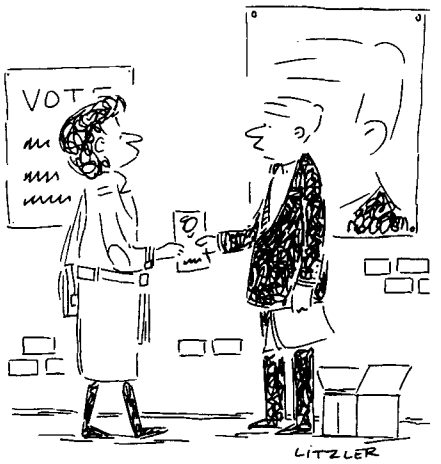
FOR THE RECORD

■ As **Dole** campaign limps to a close, **George Will** advises: "The Republican Party has to not only resign itself to [Dole's] defeat, it has to advertise his defeat and it has to try and save itself in Congress by going to the country saying, 'You're going to have a Democratic President, do you want him unrestrained by a countervailing force in Congress?'". . . . Says Eagle Forum head **Phyllis Schlafly**: "Keeping Congress Republican is a higher priority for us now." . . . After timid debate performance by vice-presidential nominee **Jack Kemp**, even Empower America colleague **Bill Bennett** pans him, saying Kemp was "concerned too much about being 'nice' and not enough about 'winning.'" . . . Dole campaign manager **Scott Reed** was reportedly so mad at Kemp that he refused to talk to him after debate. Kemp failed to use prepared zingers, e.g., when **Al Gore** attacked Kemp's record, Kemp was supposed to respond: "Say, Al, did you get that out of my FBI file?" . . . Dole may have had case of nerves in first debate. According to Boston College neuropsychology professor **Joe Tecce**, "While the normal blink rate for someone speaking on TV is 31 to 50 blinks per minute, Bob Dole averaged an astounding 147—nearly three blinks per second."

■ Can you say "shameless"? **Clinton** campaign begins running ad on Christian radio stations that says, in part: "Don't be misled by Bob Dole's attack ads. President Clinton wants a complete ban on late-term abortions except when the mother's life is in danger or she faces severe health risks, such as the inability to have another child. The President signed the Defense of Marriage Act [DOMA], supports curfews and school uniforms to teach our children discipline." Under pressure from gay groups, campaign strikes reference to DOMA. . . . **George Stephanopoulos**, 35, tells the *New Yorker* he wants out of a Clinton second term: "I don't know what I'll do, I've had a great run, a great ride, but it feels like I'm done. It's not that I'm above it, but I can't do it any more. I just have to grow up." . . . Secretary of State **Warren Christopher** and Secretary of Defense **William Perry** are also expected to leave.

■ Republicans crow over poll numbers showing Congress has its highest approval ratings in at least a decade. A Public Opinion Strategies polls pegs Congress's approval rating at 50 per cent, up from 32 per cent in May. . . . But political analyst **Stuart Rothenberg** puts Democrats' chances of retaking the House at 50–50. . . . New Senate Majority Leader **Trent Lott** comes under fire for being too conciliatory toward Democrats—by liberal Republican Appropriations Committee Chairman **Mark Hatfield**, of all people. Before negotiating session with White House over this year's budget, Hatfield warned his colleague: "Trent, you're giving away too much." . . . Rep. **Pat Roberts** (R., Kan.) has to apologize for calling opponent in Senate race, **Sally Thompson**, a "bitch" after a debate. . . . Most vulnerable GOP senator is **Bob Smith** (N.H.); observers say he suffers from pro-life stand and from going out on a limb for **Phil Gramm**'s presidential run. . . . Ex-track star **Jim Ryun**, running for Congress in Kansas, weathers a controversy over an article he co-wrote with his wife called "Courtship Makes a Comeback" for *Focus on the Family* magazine, arguing that courtship "ensures premarital sexual abstinence, protects children from the pain of bad relationships, and prepares a young couple for a lasting relationship." Scandalized Democrats charge courtship is "extremely controlling" and "very patriarchal." . . . **J. E. (Billy) McKinney,** father of Democratic Georgia Rep. **Cynthia McKinney**, resigns from daughter's campaign after he calls her opponent, **John Mitnick**, a "racist Jew."



"Here. This will tell you where I straddle on the issues."

■ Indonesian politician **Sri-Bintang** says that donations by the immensely rich **Riady** family to Bill Clinton's Democrats "are not a big deal at all, compared to the corruption in Indonesia. And what could you get for that small amount? It's nothing at all." . . . Pres. **Suharto**'s "national car" plan, headed by the Indonesian dictator's youngest son, **Hutomo Mandal (Tommy) Putra**, is running into trouble with World Trade Organization for illegal import duties. The car itself has the unfortunate name **Timor**, the island notorious for human-rights violations. . . . William Perry had no success in bringing around members of Russian Duma hostile to the START 2 treaty, which would slash American and former Soviet warheads to about 3,000 each by 2003. Some Russian legislators, including Communist leader **Gennady Zyuganov**, tie treaty to expansion eastward of NATO. . . . Moscow is still helping **Fidel Castro** build a nuclear power plant in Cuba, which the U.S. feels could be a safety risk, less than 200 miles from Key West. . . . Chinese foreign minister **Qian Qichen** denies telling *Asian Wall Street Journal* interviewer that Hong Kong student protest demonstrations against Tiananmen Square massacre would be banned after Peking's takeover next year.

■ How's this for unintended consequences? **Robert Hahn** of American Enterprise Institute argues in new paper that longer delays at airports because of new security measures will push some travelers into cars for shorter trips. Driving is 10 to 20 per cent more dangerous. So saving 36 lives in planes will cost at least 36 on the road. . . . A **Luntz** Research poll shows that 53 per cent of Generation X-ers believe the soap opera *General Hospital* will last longer than Medicare.

■ The Democratic National Committee asks fundraiser **John Huang** to help sort out legality of Indonesian funds he had solicited. Says an RNC spokesman: "It's a little like **O. J. Simpson** dedicating his life to finding the killer." . . . **Janet Anderson,** poised to become minister for women if British Labour Party wins, promises "totally" in jest: "Under Labour, women will become more promiscuous. That's an election pledge."

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THE WEEK

■ Vice President Gore says he "didn't know" he was in a Buddhist temple when he picked up a check for $140,000. Contributions from tax-exempt organizations are illegal, so it helps not to notice the incense, saffron robes, shaved heads, and gongs when collecting from priests who have taken a vow of poverty.

■ It's a story that, for the Clinton Administration, sounds quite familiar: Little Rock connections, Webster Hubbell, casual contempt for the law, Ron Brown wheelings-and-dealings. But it has a host of bizarre twists: a fundraiser held at a Buddhist temple, a multi-billion-dollar Indonesian conglomerate called the Lippo Group, a guy named Gandhi giving more than $300,000 to the Democratic National Committee. None of this tangle, already known as Indogate, will be sorted out before the election, a fact that White House spokesman Michael McCurry openly laughs about. What we do know is that almost certainly money from Indonesian sources has been laundered through Democratic coffers, and that one of the rainmakers, fundraiser John Huang, was rewarded with an influential spot in the Commerce Department; it may well be that the free-flowing Asian cash has influenced the Administration's trade and human-rights policies. However, the scandal probably is of little benefit to Bob Dole in the short term, and in the long term it will only create more pressure for misguided Perot-style campaign-finance reform. So, attention, goo-goo reformers: it doesn't matter what the law is as long as the Administration has no interest in obeying it.

■ But who will pardon Clinton?

■ Jack Kemp's aspirations were set back by his lackluster performance against Al Gore. Kemp did not clearly win a single exchange with the Vice President. He talked about growth and tax cuts, without making the case for the 15 per cent tax cut that is the centerpiece of the Dole campaign. On questions of foreign policy and American mores, he let Gore position himself to his right. Gore left the Administration wide open for an attack on its policies on race and sex preferences; Kemp fumbled. Worst of all, he seemed to accept Gore's contention that every Republican other than Kemp is a racial troglodyte. Since he doesn't believe that, why didn't he say so? Jack Kemp needs a bridge to his base.

■ No one is happier to see the campaign come to an end than Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary, who wants the plane back.

■ Democrats were recruiting their congressional candidates during the dog days after the 1994 elections—and it shows. Here are seven of the wackiest: 1) Maria Elena Milton (running against Rep. John Shadegg, Ariz.), a LaRouche Democrat who supports, ahem, ambitious infrastructure projects like a Eurasian Land Bridge (can that be what they mean by a "bridge to the future"?); 2) Bill Yellowtail (against Rick Hill, Montana), running despite two felony convictions for knocking off a camera store and stealing $2,000 worth of equipment (hey, if he doesn't win, there's always the White House Security Office); 3) Walter Capps (Rep. Andrea Seastrand, Calif.), who at the Democratic National Convention invoked "global leaders" like "Thomas Jefferson, Franklin Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy, Maya Angelou . . ."; 4) Gerald Houseman (Rep. Mark Souder, Ind.), running in a district dependent on the auto industry after serving as chairman of the Committee for Zero Automobile Growth; 5) Ron Dinicola (Rep. Phil English, Pa.), a Hollywood lawyer with a client list of sleaze balls that puts Johnnie Cochran to shame; 6) Dennis Kucinich (Rep. Martin Hoke, Ohio), whose chief credential is presiding as mayor over the default of the city of Cleveland (hmm, maybe he *is* qualified); 7) Kevin Quigley (Rep. Jack Metcalf, Wash.) caught laundering campaign funds (and he wasn't even working at the DNC). If all this sounds bad, just wait to see whom the Democrats have lined up for committee chairmanships . . .

■ "The last time I checked, the Constitution said 'of the people, by the people, and for the people.' That's what the Declaration of Independence said." Read it again, carefully. This was President Clinton refuting Republican "anti-government" views to a crowd of supporters after the debate. The last time *we* checked, the phrase was in

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Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. No wonder Mr. Clinton sneered at Mr. Dole's "old" ideas. He has never encountered any of them.

■ Be careful what you ask for. Two of California's largest companies, the electronics giant Hewlett-Packard and the mammoth HMO Kaiser Permanente, asked voters for their opinions on racial favoritism (they didn't phrase it quite like that, to be sure). Their intent in paying for the poll—and scheduling its release for a few weeks prior to the November elections—was apparently to slow momentum for the California Civil Rights Initiative, which would consign race and gender preferences in government programs to history's ash heap. But respondents didn't cooperate. The pollsters forsook candor for euphemism, asking for views on "affirmative action" rather than "reverse discrimination," but those surveyed still turned thumbs down—favoring an end to such unfairness in the private sector by 51 per cent to 36 per cent, and in government programs by 49 per cent to 40 per cent. At the same time, 76 per cent supported remedial courses to bring disadvantaged minorities up to speed, so the opposition to preferential hiring can't be caricatured as "mean spirited." All in all, the results were pronounced "very troubling" by representatives of the two companies. It does help explain why support for CCRI, at least as of this writing, has proved impervious to every demagogic attack (and there has been no other kind) launched against it. Good sense lives, even in the state that gave us Jerry Brown, Valley Girls, the Summer of Love, Hewlett-Packard, and Kaiser Permanente.

■ "That's what drug it out," said Mr. Clinton, explaining some bureaucratic delay. His dragged policies aren't working either.

■ Serious criminals have been ineligible for naturalization since 1802—or were, until the Clinton Administration got into the act. Early this month Rosemary Jenks of the Center for Immigration Studies gave the Senate Immigration Subcommittee documents showing that the Administration took unethical—perhaps illegal—steps to, in the words of one Gore aide, "produce a million new citizens before election day." The White House pressured the Immigration and Naturalization Service to meet hefty "production goals." INS employees rubberstamped applications, ignoring evidence of fraud on the required English and civics tests. Worse, the INS evaded or ignored the results of FBI fingerprint checks. "One of these days," an INS employee complained in a memo, the INS "is going to naturalize an axe-murderer." FBI and INS records show that hundreds of violent criminals have received citizenship over the last year. Maybe *they* can replace Craig Livingstone.

■ CBS News is panting to hire Clinton advisor George Stephanopoulos as a correspondent, presumably to balance its right-wing bias.

■ New York City voters will unfortunately find it necessary to repeat themselves November 5, when they will vote No on a ballot proposal softening the term limits imposed on the City Council, the mayor, and other officeholders in 1993. The original law, which imposed a two-term limit, would force New York's most limpet-like politicians out of office by 2001. But the City Council has offered a new measure that would raise the limit to three terms and restart the clock, so that many would not have to leave until 2007. The battle pits New Yorkers for Term Limits and Ronald Lauder, who favor the original measure, against Council Speaker Peter Vallone, Mayor Giuliani, and a horde of special interests that have ponied up hundreds of thousands of dollars to pass the new "reform." Their ads say the city will be at a virtual standstill without the Council elders, but polls show that even liberal New Yorkers don't mind that. And if term limits can make it *there*, they can make it anywhere.

■ Hillary Clinton is lying low again this week. More proof that the Democrats are campaigning to win.

■ Russia's charismatic hardliner, Gen. Aleksandr Lebed, was the victim of a pre-emptive strike on October 17, when Kremlin rivals forced his ouster as Boris Yeltsin's national security advisor. It was bound to happen sooner or later; only the timing was a surprise. Lebed's rivals feared his free-wheeling diplomacy, his self-promotion, and his growing popularity. The idea of Lebed wielding power inside the Kremlin while Yeltsin was in the hospital for heart surgery seemed too dangerous. But he will be a formidable political force wherever he is. The Russian people, reeling from corruption and mafia/nomenklatura rule, view Lebed as their potential savior. It is the classic formula for a man on horseback. The Clinton Administration's Russia policy hangs by a (surgical) thread.

■ God is love, and, during their upcoming conference in Zimbabwe, clergymen from the World Council of Churches want to be allowed to practice godliness on all fronts. They have persuaded Zimbabwe's president, Robert Mugabe, to relax his views on one type of love. Mugabe calls homosexuals "worse than dogs and pigs"

It's like Mother's Milk

When gifts from Indonesia cross
The President's hot palm,
He writes the nicest thank-you notes
And never feels a qualm.

—W. H. VON DREELE

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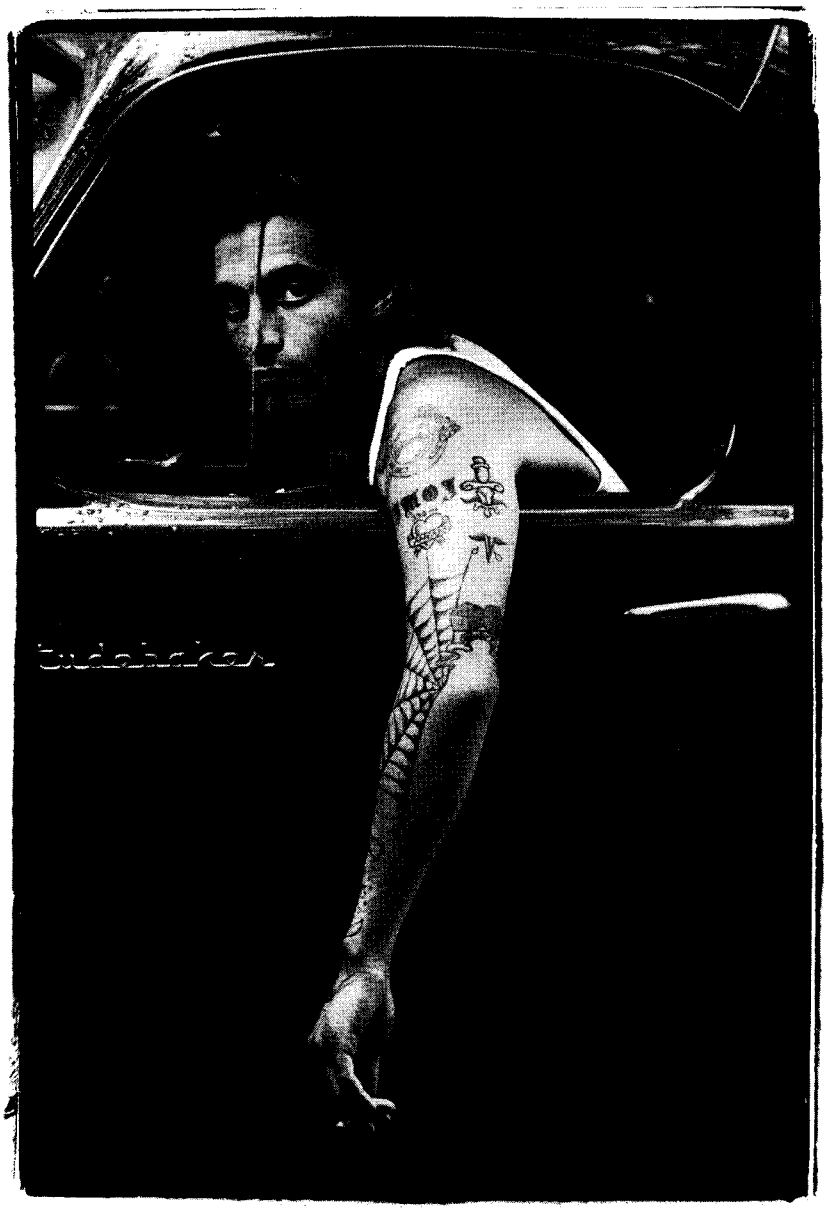
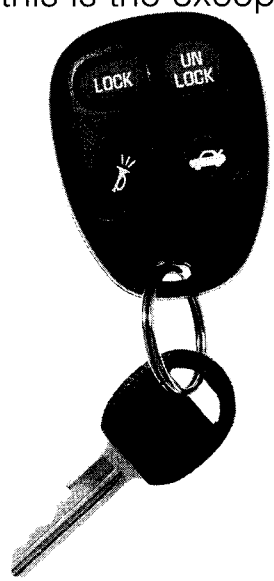
As a rule he can pick any lock right out of the air.



(this is the exception)



A remote keyless entry device can unlock your car door from a distance, right?

So a thief lurking nearby with a special receiver can pick up the signal, record it, and re-send it later to unlock the car, right?

Wrong.

If it's the new UT Automotive Remote Keyless Entry System – which changes the message sent after each use – the signal the thief recorded is useless.

United Technologies makes these systems for GM, Nissan, Honda and Isuzu. If you own or lease one of their new cars, you may already have our remote keyless entry system.

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Be there first.

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and punishes homosexual acts with 12-month jail terms. While they're in Harare, though, the gays of the WCC will be free to love each other, and any willing Zimbabweans, as their Christian consciences dictate. Of course this kind of thing—pressuring Third World nations to alter their traditional folkways to suit Western tastes—used to be called "cultural imperialism," especially by the WCC. But, "Behold, I make all things new."

■ Scientists announced that they have discovered a direct link between cigarettes and demagoguery.

■ When she was a 19-year-old student in Birmingham, England, Claire Short got pregnant out of wedlock and gave the baby up for adoption. Miss Short grew up to be a left-wing Member of Parliament. The baby grew up to be Toby Graham, a conservative lawyer who once ran for Parliament as a Tory. Recently Mr. Graham sought out his birth mother and, in a joyous moment for both mother and son, found her. On Mr. Graham's first visit to Miss Short's office, she worried that his "posh accent" might alarm her lefty colleagues. It didn't. Since their reunion, Tory son and Labour mom have got along beautifully. Indeed, there is something for everyone in this tale: environmentalists will note that Tory Toby was raised by a rich family; fans of *The Bell Curve* can see that a mother and son from two different worlds both show ambition, drive, and political skill. Well, for almost everyone. As Miss Short explains, at moments during her pregnancy she contemplated an abortion, but it would have been illegal, and her parents would not have consented to any abortion, legal or otherwise. How many unmarried women who unintentionally get pregnant today will experience such joyous reunions?

■ Madonna gave birth. Good news! It's . . . a baby.

No Doubt

THE great horse Secretariat won the Belmont Stakes by thirty lengths. No one (except perhaps Chelsea) thinks Bill Clinton has been a great President. Yet he leads Bob Dole by a Secretariat-style margin. Why? Some obvious preliminary factors have to be noted. The economy is in a recovery. It may be that the recovery began under George Bush; that it is weak; that better policies could have made it stronger; and that Mr. Clinton's policies will be ill suited to cope with the downturn that is likely to take place in the next four years. Still, even a boomlet is better than a bust.

Also, America is not fighting any wars. Most of our wars have produced surges of patriotism and of popularity for the incumbent. But the Vietnam War, as Mr. Clinton will recall, produced strong domestic disaffection. He need not worry. Though our troops are scattered hither and yon, they are not (yet) fighting.

A Late Offensive

California, here Dole comes,
Trumpeting fe-fi-fo-fums,
As Kemp, like a pinwheel, spews
Facts so fast, they miss the News.
Liddy, meanwhile, hits the tube,
Deftly slathering the lube,
As they bet the ranch along
With the outhouse. What went wrong?

—W. H. VON DREELE

Prosperity and peace put the burden of proof on any challenger. This challenger, moreover, started with a handicap. The Republican 104th Congress, which took office with triumphalist fanfare in January 1995, had become, a year later, a spent and discredited force. The debacle is usually blamed on Newt Gingrich's decision, after the early successes of the Contract with America, to try to reform Medicare without the support of a friendly White House. In addition to this recklessness, the GOP was too timid on issues—quotas, immigration overload, judicial overreach—that were equally important *and* surefire electoral winners. Whether this was because Mr. Gingrich was too worried about keeping Republican liberals in line, or because he does not care passionately about such issues himself, he missed a great chance. Any Republican who emerged from the Presidential primaries would have labored under this Congress's unpopularity.

To this bleak prospect Bob Dole brings disabilities of his own. He wasn't bred to be a candidate in the voter-friendly era of TV. He grew up on the laconic plains of Kansas; his tendencies to terseness and a dark wit were reinforced by his lonely recovery from his war wounds; and finally he settled into a career in the Senate where, since everyone knows the minutiae, fragmentary references suffice to get one's point across. This, however, is hardly the case during a presidential campaign, as Dole has demonstrated. To knock Clinton on the Indonesian fundraising scandal during the second debate, Dole essentially said: Indonesia—fundraising—*L.A. Times*—giving that money back. Say again?

Dole adds other shortcomings as a candidate: the lack of organization that has plagued his campaign, his political rudderlessness once he stepped from the well of the Senate (one day he's going to talk about trust, the next he's not, the day after that he is, etc.), and his general fear of being branded "mean" personally and "divisive" politically—a classic case of internalizing the media's critique.

Despite these flaws as a candidate, Dole would make a more than adequate President. Campaigning puts a premium on verbal, intellectual, and imaginative skills—the "vision thing." But governing is a practical activity, not a

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They Cringed When I Walked Up to the Podium. But When I Started to Speak...

Emily finished her presentation. It was vintage Emily: informed, upbeat, articulate and laced with riotous one-liners about her mother. It's no wonder she's the most sought-after speaker in our industry.

When she began to introduce me, the mood of the room instantly changed. You could feel the letdown and hear the low buzz.

I saw Karen whispering to Arthur down front: "He's terrible. Nervous. Reads his speech. I don't know why he's on the program."

Then I Started to Speak

Emily's introduction of me ended and I strode to the podium amid an anemic patter of applause. Unlike all previous speakers, I did not thank the person who introduced me. I did not tell everybody how pleased I was to be there. Nor did I start with a lame joke. And it was instantly apparent that, for the first time, I wasn't reading my speech.

Instead I looked out over the sea of faces and, in a firm voice that resonated to the last row, I made a brash, outrageous promise that caused everyone in the room to collectively suck in their breath. From that moment on, *I had them in the palm of my hand*. They laughed where they were supposed to. I could see Carl — and later, Louise — puff up with pride when I mentioned their accomplishments and asked them to stand for a round of applause. At the end, I dropped a bombshell and got the only standing ovation of the day.

A Complete Triumph!

When the meeting adjourned, I found myself surrounded by excited faces. How my colleagues carried on! Men and women alike pumped my hand to congratulate me. It was great for the ego; but let's face it, they wanted to know how I had been transformed into a world-class speaker seemingly overnight.

"Who is your teacher?" they wanted to know. "How long have you studied?"

Later, in the bar, I told them my story.

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theoretical one, and as such it is best done by men who have learned it by watching others do it and then by practicing it themselves. Mr. Dole has had a long apprenticeship in high politics, as a congressman, a senator, the chairman of the Republican National Committee, a candidate for the Vice Presidency, Senate Minority Leader, and, finally, Senate Majority Leader. The accumulated experience that career represents is a fund of practical knowledge that Mr. Dole is not fully conscious he possesses. He is therefore hard put to display it in the "policy wonk" style at which Mr. Clinton excels, but he would draw upon it constantly when faced with the unforeseeable problems that land daily on a President's desk. That fund of experience and knowledge—let us call the combination "wisdom"—explains in part the high regard in which he is held by Democratic senators as well as Republican ones. Those who know him best, and who also know his opponent best, feel that the country would be in much safer hands during a Dole Presidency. It is a judgment that should carry weight with the rest of us.

Ideally, of course, conservatives would like to see these solid qualities allied to anti-statist economics, a defense of the traditional moral virtues, and support for American leadership in world affairs. Here Mr. Dole's record is more mixed—but the consistent thread uniting his actions is that of responsibility. That sense of responsibility

Right Data

WHAT speed limit?

OK. Let's say the economy is doing pretty well. (Forget, for now, that GDP has expanded at a mere 2.5 per cent average annual rate during this recovery, or just one-third the postwar average.) Can a tax cut generate still faster growth? Two earlier episodes suggest it can.

Treasury Secretary Andrew Mellon first popularized the notion that tax reductions stimulate economic activity. In 1922 he orchestrated the first of three major tax bills, cutting the top rate from 73 per cent to 58 per cent. A vigorous recovery was already under way in 1925, when the top rate was slashed to 25 per cent; 44 per cent of all taxpayers were removed from the tax rolls that year through increases in the personal exemption.

"It was very naturally anticipated that these changes would result in considerable loss in revenue," Mellon wrote in his 1927 annual report. "As a matter of fact, however, the individual returns for the calendar year 1925 showed a larger tax than did those for 1924." Taxes paid by individuals making $500,000 and over nearly doubled between 1923 and 1925. And by 1928, revenues in the $100,000+ brackets were larger than total revenues had been in 1923 and 1924.

Because of its catastrophic end, many believe the prosperity of the 1920s was in some sense phony or unreal. Actually, it was a remarkable decade. Nominal GDP rose from $70 billion in 1920 to $103 billion in 1929, and since prices were falling, real GDP rose 54 per cent. (The Reagan boom suffers by comparison: GDP up 33 per cent between 1982 and 1989.) There were more applications for patents in 1929 than in any subsequent year until 1965. From 1923 to 1929, unemployment averaged 3.3 per cent. Fears about the national debt proved groundless. Spending restraint coupled with the tax cuts pared down the debt from $25.5 billion in 1919 to $16.2 billion in 1930.

Unfortunately, the lesson was soon forgotten. At the depth of the Depression, in June 1932, Congress increased the top tax rate to 63 per cent. The bottom tax rate rose to 4 per cent from 1.1 per cent. Herbert Hoover insisted the move was necessary to balance the budget and restore confidence in financial markets. When income-tax revenue plummeted from $834 million in 1931 to $427 million in 1932, Hoover proposed a new round of tax hikes. Under Roosevelt, rates were increased in steps, the top rate reaching a wartime high of 94 per cent. In 1946 this was lowered to 91 per cent, where it basically remained until the 1960s.

John F. Kennedy's 1960 platform pledged that "our economy can and must grow at an average rate of 5 per cent annually, almost twice as fast as our average annual rate since 1953." Kennedy proposed an across-the-board tax cut, lowering rates from the 14 to 91 per cent range to 14 to 65 per cent. In February 1964, Congress passed a tax bill, albeit with a top rate slightly above JFK's recommendation.

Revenues, adjusted for inflation, grew by one-third between 1961 and 1968. In congressional testimony a few years later, Walter Heller, Kennedy's chief economist, said of the tax cut: ". . . it did seem to have a tremendously stimulative effect . . . It was the major factor that led to our running a $3-billion surplus by the middle of 1965 before escalation in Vietnam struck us."

Is any of this relevant today? Consider this. Clinton supporters say the current recovery is sub-par because the 1990–91 recession was milder than average. That may be true—but it was no milder than the 1960–61 recession. That was followed by the longest economic expansion in U.S. history—helped along by the Kennedy tax cut. —Ed Rubenstein

INCOME-TAX COLLECTIONS AFTER TAX CUTS IN THE 1920s AND 1960s

Adjusted Gross Income	1923	1925	Change, 1923–25	1963	1965	Change, 1963–65
(Thousands)		(Millions)			(Billions)	
$0 to 20	$211.8	$ 80.6	–62%	$36.1	$34.6	–4%
20 to 50	132.2	147.4	+11	6.7	7.4	+10
50 to 100	108.9	147.8	+36	2.9	3.7	+28
100 to 500	149.5	238.2	+59	1.9	2.8	+47
500+	61.3	120.6	+97	0.6	1.0	+67
Total	$663.7	$734.6	+11%	$48.2	$49.5	+3%
Top Tax Rate	58%	28%		91%	70%	

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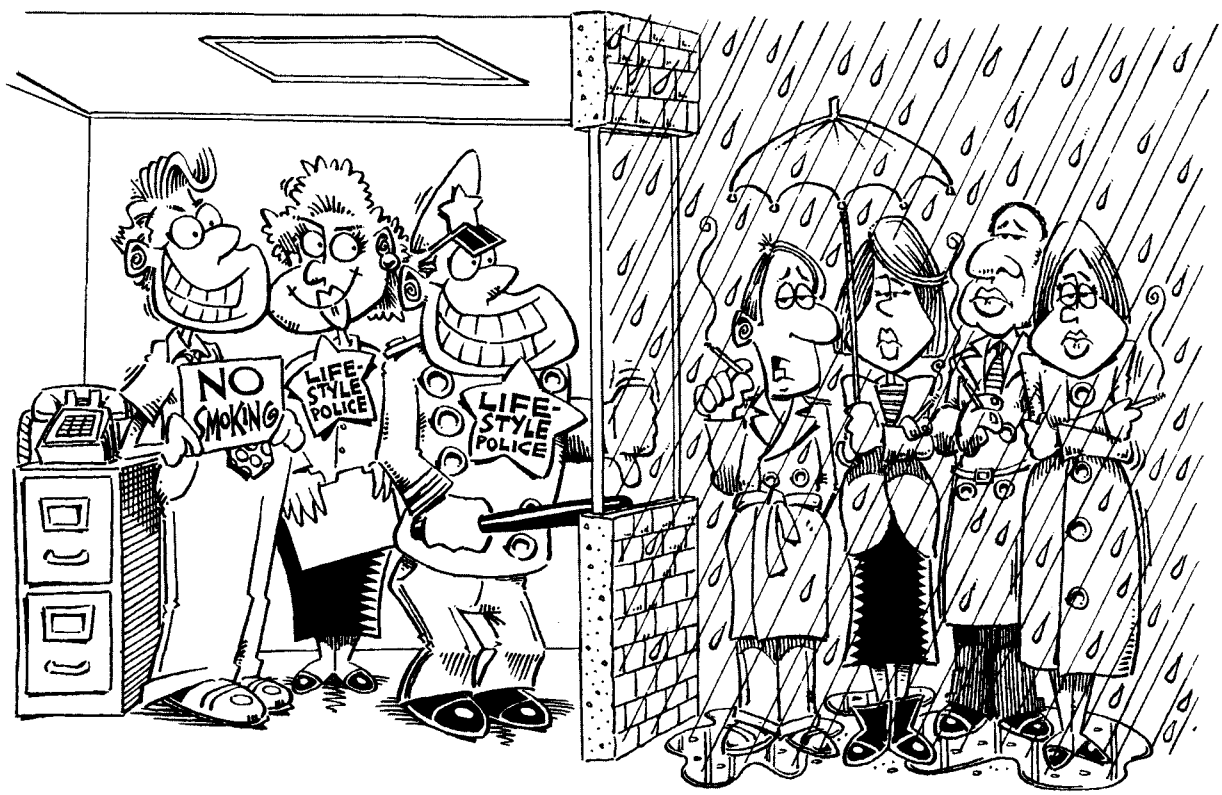
The Lifestyle Police have kicked smokers out in the rain.

They won't stop there.



If you're a smoker, you've already met the "Lifestyle Police." You might live in a city where they've extinguished the right to enjoy a cigarette after a meal, at work or even in public parks.

These Lifestyle Police are serious. Their goal is nothing short of prohibition.

It's time to fight back. We're the National Smokers Alliance, a grassroots membership organization of adult smokers and non-smokers dedicated to preserving personal freedoms. We're fighting federal, state and local smoking bans across the country. More are introduced every month.

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NATIONAL SMOKERS ALLIANCE

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❑ Yes, I want to join. Enclosed please find $10.00 for a one-year membership.

To charge your membership dues, or for more information, please call the NSA toll-free hotline at **1-800-224-3322.**

Name

Address

City State Zip

( )

Phone Number

By signing below, I certify that I am at least 21 years of age.

Signature Date

Contributions or gifts to the National Smokers Alliance are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes. NSA estimates that the portion of contributions, gifts or dues paid that are allocable to lobbying and political expenses is 75 percent. Under federal tax law, this portion of your dues is not deductible as a business expense.

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Defending smokers' rights protects everyone's.

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Seasonal Concerns

As ghouls inspect their wardrobes
And broomstick witches preen,
While pumpkins, facing surgeons,
Prepare for Halloween,
Big Labor stalks the freshmen
Like specters from a crypt,
Unleashing ads so frightful,
Blood oozes from the script.

—W. H. VON DREELE

has sometimes made him too cautious in cutting taxes or removing the perverse incentives of the welfare state. Failing to grasp Milton Friedman's gloss on Parkinson's Law that expenditure rises to meet the revenue available—he has always wanted to cut spending before cutting taxes. But unlike many chest-thumping conservatives, he has been prepared to cut spending and even to cull some sacred cows. It was Bob Dole who led the Senate in the effort to restrain Social Security COLAs in 1985—the first serious attempt to face a reality that Americans continue to wish away. He has been a prudent advocate of America's world role and an uncomfortable but usually reliable advocate of the "social issues."

Mr. Dole has now removed our principal reservation about his economic record by committing himself to a 15 per cent tax cut. His word, as he rightly boasts, is his bond. If elected, he will carry out that policy. All in all, conservatives should prefer it to be implemented by a man whose guiding light is responsibility rather than by those who see tax cuts as a costless panacea.

Mr. Dole would therefore be the right choice even if he were opposed by a competent and decent opponent such as Senator Joseph Lieberman or Senator John Breaux. But his strongest claim on the nation's votes is his opponent. He is Not Clinton—and in a well-ordered world that would be argument enough.

This is not to demonize the sitting President. A mischievous conservative with time on his hands could well make the case that Mr. Clinton is a perfectly pleasant nullity—a cork on the long-term Republican tide—and likely to become more so as he is distracted by the growing din of White House scandals. The temptation should be resisted on both counts. As Kate O'Beirne establishes (p. 37), the President is putting together a new coalition in favor of a middle-class welfare state, or "lots of little government," that might well survive his own disgrace. And the prospect of a second Watergate and its consequences—further loss of confidence in American institutions at home and a weakened United States abroad—should deter any patriotic citizen from voting for a President the better to impeach him.

When all is said and done, however, this election is a choice between a man whose word is his bond and a man whose word is thistledown. Mr. Clinton is faithless in public. He stands for nothing for long, and for anything for a time. He breaks his word to allies (the welfare lobby, gay activists, liberals) and to opponents (Republicans in the budget negotiations) with equal facility. He is so unreliable that he occasionally keeps his word in order to prevent our betting on a certainty. Such a man should not be President of the United States.

If Bill Clinton is re-elected, therefore, the continuation of a Republican majority in Congress becomes even more important. It is needed, at the very least, to block Clinton's worst judicial appointments and to uncover its worst abuses (David Broder, no less, has complained that this Administration has "the most morally lax standard I have ever seen"). The alternative outcome, a Democratic takeover, would be seen by the press and the victors themselves as a mandate for a recrudescent, if somewhat chastened, liberalism. House Democrats are more left-wing than ever, and the policy results of a united Democratic government would fall somewhere between Bill Clinton and John Conyers, Henry Waxman, David Bonior, etc. Big Labor would call in all of its many chits. The regulatory state would expand enormously. Defense preparedness would resume its free-fall. Bi-partisan bills like the ban on partial-birth abortion would probably still have the abstract support of a majority of congressmen, but the Democratic leadership would never allow such bills to reach the floor. It would be business as usual inside the Beltway—with the exception that the corporate lobbies that stuck their necks out for Republican reforms would be severely punished. The stars would have returned to their courses. And the Democrats would try to change the rules of the political game to make sure that nothing like 1994 would ever dislodge them again.

The National Question

MEANWHILE, conservatives must find ways to understand and articulate the national question—the cluster of issues that includes quotas, unchecked immigration, the language we speak, the ideals we honor. If that phrase doesn't ring a bell, that is itself part of the problem.

For most of the history of the modern conservative movement, the chief threat to America's identity came from outside—from international Communism. Now the challenge comes from us: a dream of "diversity," regulated and subsidized by the state, which is shared by America's elites and select client groups. Their vision is obviously a far less dramatic and brutal threat than Leninism. It does not own missiles or prison camps. But it promises to transform America just the same.

Some conservatives are concerned with some of these issues. Some see no problem at all: for years, conservative

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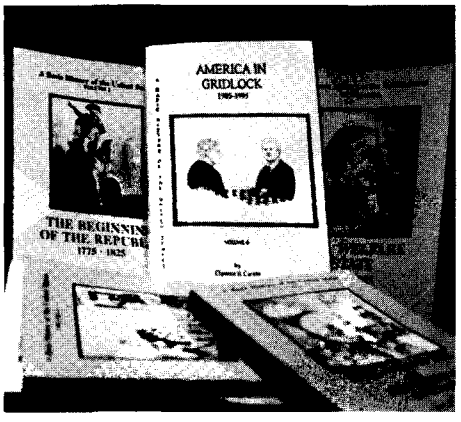

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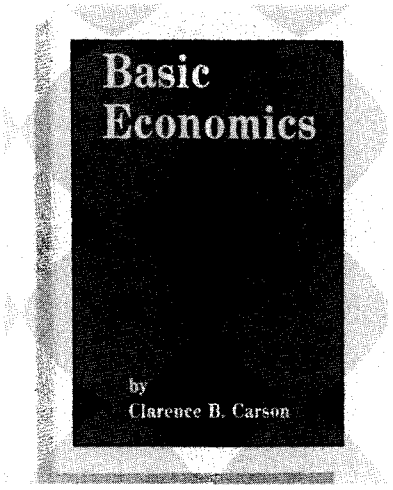

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enthusiasts for unrestricted immigration insisted (sincerely) that they were opposed to multiculturalism, without seeing the connection between the two. Of politicians/pundits, only Pat Buchanan has tried to bundle these issues together—and he bursts his own package by trying to stuff trade regulation into it.

But conservatives will have to come to grips with these issues if they expect to come to power, or to use it to the lasting good of the country. The national question is the missing term of the national debate. Without it, economists and moralists fly erratically, like a triplane missing a wing. Conservatives need a Contract with America that is about America.

Guns across the Water

IN OLD English law it was called a deodand (literally, to be given to God): a physical object which had caused someone's untimely death and which therefore was confiscated. All the privately owned handguns in Britain are currently threatened with this fate. In March, when a madman walked into the school in the small Scottish town of Dunblane and shot dead 16 children and their teacher before killing himself, a clamor erupted for the possession of handguns to be made illegal. The government appointed Lord Cullen, a senior Scottish judge, to make a report. The political parties agreed to wait for it and, implicitly, to accept his recommendation.

Needless to say, they have done nothing of the sort. "This should not be a political issue," said a Labour Party spokesman, and promised that it would not be, provided the Conservative government did as Labour wanted and imposed a complete ban. The populist press added its voice. "For the sake of the Dunblane angels ban all handguns today," pleaded the front page of *The Sun*.

The Cullen Report proved careful, reasoned, and moderate. But the government was already committed to going "beyond Cullen." The Home Secretary announced what he proudly called some of the toughest gun-control laws in the world. The only handguns to be permitted would be single-shot .22 caliber target pistols, which must be kept in heavily (and expensively) fortified gun-club buildings. The 160,000 legally owned larger-caliber semi-automatic pistols must be surrendered and destroyed, under pain of up to ten years' imprisonment. An estimated two-thirds of gun owners will lose their weapons. Yet no one is satisfied. The gun lobby complains of being victimized, while the anti-gun campaigners are outraged that the ban is less than total.

The gun-control debate in Britain has been quite different from that in America. British law is already very strict; it is extremely hard for an ordinary person to get a license to keep, let alone carry, a gun for self-protection. Automatic weapons are prohibited, and possession even of shotguns is tightly controlled. Almost all legally held handguns are owned by gun-club members for competitive shooting. So the discussion has focused entirely on shooting as a sport, not on gun ownership as an essential liberty or as a deterrent to crime. Nobody knows how many guns are illegally held. Criminals, especially in the drug racket, are increasingly ready to shoot; in response, an increasing number of policemen are armed.

Even small-caliber pistols should be banned, said one of the Dunblane parents, because they too could kill a child. So can motor cars and matches and kitchen knives, but no one suggests that they be banned. "The mark of a mature society," wrote a commentator in the London *Evening Standard*, "is to rise above the impulses and instincts of the moment, and to make measured response to dreadful events." No such luck.

First Things First

CAN a Christian, or a Jew, or any other thoughtful religious person, justify resistance to unjust laws passed by our modern American democracy? And if such laws seem permanently entrenched, can he abandon his general duty toward lawful authority and (though forswearing violent resistance) live as a kind of internal exile, refusing to obey certain laws, even obstructing their enforcement, and withholding a portion of his taxes on the grounds that they feed the immoral appetites of an illegitimate Leviathan?

These questions are raised not in the abstract by NATIONAL REVIEW, but in the concrete circumstances of today's judicial decisions on abortion, physician-assisted suicide (a/k/a euthanasia), gay marriage, and social institutions and morality in general, by *First Things*, the magazine on religion and public life, edited by Richard John Neuhaus. The November issue of *First Things* contains a symposium on "The End of Democracy." To oversimplify, it offers two broad and (we would contend) not fully compatible judgments. The first argument—advanced by Robert Bork and Hadley Arkes—is that the federal courts have abused judicial review to the point of usurping the powers of elected legislatures and thereby eroding American democracy—and that something should be done about it. *NR* fully endorses that argument and would like to see judicial review severely curbed. But the second claim—which appears in the essays of Russell Hittinger, Robert George, and Charles Colson—is more dubious. It is that, because politicians and people have acquiesced in these judicial decisions (in effect, by not rising up to reverse them), American democracy itself has embraced a moral neutrality in the law that is oppressive toward religious citizens, hostile to any morality that can be shown to have religious roots (i.e., all of them), destructive of social institutions like marriage and family which have until now been shored up by religious morality embodied in law, and literally murderous toward the unborn—and that therefore the American democratic regime may be "illegitimate."

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Of course, the stronger the first argument, the weaker the second. If the courts are our unelected rulers, then American democracy cannot be held responsible for what are undoubtedly the crimes and misdemeanors they commit. All is not yet lost, moreover. The people have allowed sovereignty to slip from them partly from an undue respect for the Supreme Court, partly from an ignorance of judicial arrogance fostered by elite journalism and the law schools, partly because they don't have all day to devote to legal questions on which they feel a sensible humility, and—to be sure—partly because they have been corrupted by decisions that have transformed sins into rights and virtues into bigotry. They may yet rise up and restore majority rule. Conservative argument should concentrate on encouraging them to do so.

Suppose, however, that Dr. Hittinger's pessimism is justified. What if the American people have surrendered to a court-imposed libertinism and made it their own? Suppose American democracy is "illegitimate" not because it is undemocratic, but because it has embraced a cold amoral legalism that tramples over the rights of religious people and traditional communities. What then?

"Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's . . ." was addressed by Christ to the subjects of a tyrannical and unjust empire whose moral and religious views (not to mention their nationalist sentiments) were outraged daily by its edicts and practices. Christ was not, of course, counseling acceptance of morally objectionable laws—He completed the injunction ". . . and to God the things that are God's"—but He was discouraging rebellion against Rome's general authority. The grounds on which a Christian may legitimately resist lawful authority are few and hard to establish—genuine oppression, positive legal injunctions to enforce a moral evil, etc. The methods he may use are narrowly circumscribed—refusal to enforce an objectionable law sometimes, organized physical resistance to it rarely, armed uprising almost never. And his aims should be appropriately modest—the withdrawal of the law rather than the overthrow of the government.

Note that these conditions do not depend upon a government's being democratic. Our general obligation to obey the laws rests upon the fact that the laws protect us (against our fellow man), not upon the ultimate justice of the government's founding, still less (fortunately) upon its general moral character. When law and government seriously oppress us (under despotism), fail to protect us (in conditions of anarchy), or threaten our very lives (Nazism, Bolshevism, Pol Pot), then our obligations to them are correspondingly relaxed, negated, or replaced by a duty of resistance. But these circumstances are happily rare. In most times and places, we have a simple moral duty to obey the law.

If democracy is not required to justify this obligation, it nonetheless strengthens it. For democracy provides legal avenues of protest and reform which remove the justification for resistance to specific unjust laws—or at least shrink it to the level of conscientious objection and modest civil disobedience (which, to be sure, is all that Dr. Hittinger et al. are claiming). Yet the principle is clear: because a democracy never finally makes up its mind but allows indefinite debate, it cannot be said to have embraced a crime or entrenched a sin. Our aim now should be to reclaim our democracy from the courts.

The Week in Verse

Each day brought *Clinton* nearer to his goal:
Small wonder he'd not take *Debate* from *Dole*
And ethics charges finally address—
Why should he care when few care in the *Press*?
Where now the hacks who dammed up *Watergate*?
They let *Whitewater* flow with all its freight.
So *Clinton* plays the skillful matador,
Sidestepping *Dole*—while *Kemp* is gored by *Gore*.
These "civil" nominees don't like to push
But talk of "trust" (it worked so well for *Bush*)
And how, un-*Clinton*-like, they'll keep their word:
It's working, too: they're sure not to come third.
To win, of course, they'd censure and condemn
And have to let their words start keeping them.
Besides, as *Democrats* harp on one theme—
That Holey Deficit! That Risky Scheme!—
And tell again of *Bill's* 10 million jobs
(Not one, alas, is likely to be *Bob's*)
Or Education, rescu'd from *Newt's* blade,
Th'Environment and Medics, -are and -aid—
To words like these who says they cannot stick?
In this, at least, our *Willie's* hardly slick!

But still his ads come viciously and oft;
The blows are hard, although the money's soft.
For everywhere the *Democrats* are strong
Helped by obliging Unions—and by *Huang*,
Who knows his way at *Lippo* and's at ease
Massaging figures—or the *Riadys*.
He stands for change, picked up in largish chunks
From *Asian* moneybags, coke-dealers—monks!—
And does his bit to help the *DNC*
To keep the wretched *Indonesians* free
By keeping close to several men of means
Who want more Fam'ly Leave—or F-16s.
Yet, tired of talk of throwing out the bums,
A sleepy nation stretches and ho-hums.

—Juvenal

Notes & Asides

■ Memo to: WFB
From: McF

Bill, I can't imagine you missed this (from the *Washington Post,* October 13), but here's another copy. I'm sure our readers would be interested.

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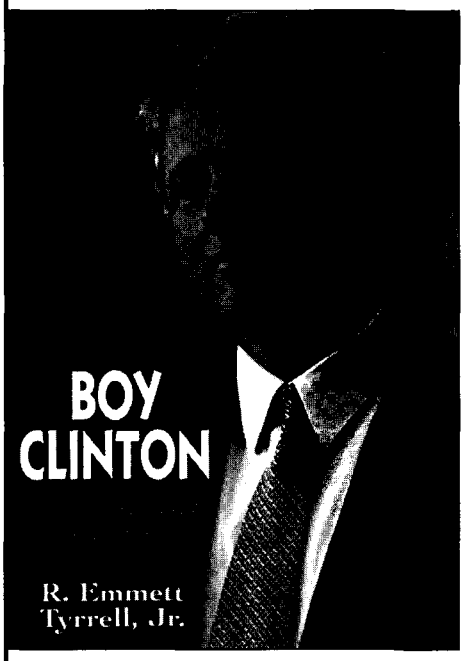
"Whew! Bob Tyrrell says things about Bill Clinton that even Hillary wouldn't say." – P.J. O'ROURKE

New York Times Bestseller



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Isn't It Time for Amnesty On Youthful Indiscretions?

MONDAY morning I was a guest on C-SPAN, and two interesting things happened. A woman called in to say she wanted to shoot Whitewater prosecutor Kenneth Starr. Then host Brian Lamb turned to me and said, "So Chris, what do you make of the story in this morning's *Washington Times* about your cousin John Buckley, Dole's communications director, alleging he used marijuana when he was at college?"

As Bertie Wooster would say, that's not the sort of thing to spring on a lad with a hangover early in the morning. But one takes these opportunities as they come, and so it seemed as good a time as any to suggest that we all might save ourselves a great deal of misplaced indignation if we declared here and now a general amnesty for anyone who did what so many in my generation did when we were young—namely, smoke pot.

Jimmy Carter pardoned draft resisters on his first full day in office in 1977. Isn't it time President Clinton put his signature to a piece of paper that declares, "Enough is enough: No public or semi-public official shall be deemed unfit for public or semi-public life for having smoked pot when they were young." That doesn't sound so outrageous, really. He could use some help with this from the other side of the aisle. He ought to be joined in this declaration by Bob Dole and other prominent Republicans.

In any given year throughout the 1970s and 1980s, about one-third of college-age Americans said they smoked pot, and in some years the number was close to half. That's a lot of people. And I knew most of them.

To paraphrase Allen Ginsberg, the angel-headed hipster of an earlier era, I saw the best minds of my generation giggle hysterically and empty the refrigerator of chocolate ice cream late at night. The pot-heads I went to high school and college with have gone on to: perform open-heart surgery, start new businesses, raise families, win Pulitzer Prizes, pay taxes, and pilot fighter jets in time of war. They have contributed to the health and prosperity of our country.

The only career avenue they were not able to pursue was working for the CIA, whose polygraphs they flunked, unlike such reliable American intelligence operatives as, say, Philip Agee, Edward Howard, and Aldrich Ames. The CIA's sticklishness about pot smoking always struck me as ironic, for we pot-heads trained ourselves to become adept at sneaky techniques that surely come in handy in intelligence work. My father-in-law, a distinguished veteran of the CIA, told me of his dismay over the agency's turning down so many promising candidates he had recommended to them because somewhere along the line they had smoked a joint or two.

LET me come clean or, if you will, dirty. In my misguided youth, I smoked so much pot that you can still get a contact high from shaking my hand. I moved on to more reputable pleasures—like martinis. For a while, I worked at the White House. I had a security clearance. I was privy to TOP SECRET/CODEWORD documents, and this was during the Cold War, when all those Russian missiles were aimed at us. One document was a real lulu. It said—well, none of your business. See, even former pot-heads can keep a secret.

On one occasion, a military aide asked me to watch the football, the briefcase containing the nuclear codes to start World War III. It was at a baseball game, and he needed to go to the bathroom and didn't want to walk through crowds alone with the briefcase. For ten minutes I had the power to destroy the world! Good thing I was mellowed out from all those years of pot smoking.

Am I condoning youthful drug use? No. Was it illegal and hedonistic? Yes. Might I have helped enrich some very, very bad people south of the border who settle their differences with chainsaws? I answer shamefacedly, yes. Was it fun? You bet it was. Did it give me interesting insights into William Blake, Beethoven, and Van Gogh? Yes. (Are they worth sharing with you? You probably had to be there.) Did I see some amazing sunsets? Oh, yes. Did it go well with sex? I'd probably better stop this particular line of inquiry.

As I write this, the front page of the *New York Times* carries the headline: "Marijuana Popular Among Teenagers." All I can say is, it must have been a slow news day.

Someday, these teenagers are going to be running the country. These are good and bright kids, many of them. The smart ones will follow the advice of St. Paul and eventually put aside childish things and go on to become doctors and fighter pilots and Presidents, despite the fact that polls now deplorably show that the majority of kids no longer aspire to be President. A general amnesty would benefit their generation as well as mine.

My cousin John called the story about him "pharmacological McCarthyism." He's a witty fellow, my cousin; whatever pot he smoked hasn't dulled his senses. His boss, Mr. Dole, has made illegal drug use a centerpiece of his campaign. In John's capacity as an articulator of the Dole message, he is now doing his part to encourage kids to say no. But that is different from branding them as criminals who forever forfeit the opportunity to serve their country.

By the end of the week, his opposite number, White House press secretary Mike McCurry, told reporters that John had "been done an injustice." It's the only time this year I've wanted to kiss a Democrat. I don't know if his boss is planning to issue pardons after the November election, but a general amnesty for acts of youthful indiscretion would be a courageous and healing act that would allow us to refocus our indignation on more urgent venalities.

—Christopher Buckley

Dear Jim: So Christopher is asking for amnesty? Manifestly, he forgets that charity begins at home! Warmest,

Bill

—WFB

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ELECTION SCENE

Surviving in Seattle?

RICH LOWRY

Dennis Dittrich

SEATTLE

REP. Rick White (R., Wash.) looks like a L. L. Bean model. He's wearing a blue plaid shirt, khakis, and a green Patagonia windbreaker. Going door-to-door on a Saturday afternoon in his suburban Seattle district, a dog barking behind every other fence, a pack of teenagers playing touch football in the street, White makes self-effacing introductions—"Hi, I'm your congressman"—and quick, smiling small talk. When a young guy in a T-shirt, khakis, and his socks answers the door with his wife and baby, the 42-year old congressman and father of four could easily switch places with him. Can this be the same man who, as the attack ads have had it for months, votes to savage seniors and poison water?

The fresh-faced White hopes voters will take one look at him and answer: of course not. Voters, he maintains, are "looking for someone who is honestly and sincerely trying to do the right thing. They're taking your measure as a human being." So, the message behind White's ads, all of which feature him talking straight into the camera, is that he's a decent one. In one spot he sits with his five-year old son, and talks about the national debt. In another, sitting in his kitchen wearing a red plaid shirt, he decries negative campaigning. White is the congressman as next-door neighbor, just trying, darnit, to do his level best back in Washington, D.C.

He brings his nice-guy smile to the most ferocious battle-ground of the 1996 congressional elections, a Washington state where Democrats rest much of their hopes for re-taking the House. Republicans won an astonishing six new seats here in 1994. Two of them are probably safe this year, but four are up for grabs. If Democrats win back all four, start saying "Speaker Gephardt." But if Republicans hold three of the four, it could be an indicator that Republicans will pick up seats nationwide. The fight for Washington began almost immediately after 1994. For more than a year, White and fellow Seattle-area freshman, Randy Tate, have been subjected to an enfilade of ads from AFL-CIO and other liberal groups that has been continuous, massive, and damaging.

"When it rains, you get wet," is how one Washington GOP official describes their effect. Tate is now so thoroughly soaked that the word most associated with him around the Beltway is "goner." But it is not all clear that the Democratic formula will have smashing success in Washington. It is equal parts AFL–CIO and Bill Clinton: relying on the unions for million-dollar attack ads, while staking a Clintonesque claim to the political center. The problem is that the AFL–CIO began running its ads so early that by now they have lost some of their punch. And Clinton's success may well be idiosyncratic, a product of his personality, of his willingness to sign recent Republican legislation, and of the general satisfaction of the country. Democratic congressional candidates will have difficulty making the same factors work for them.

Washington is hotly contested and volatile political ground. In 1992, riding the wave of a 11-point Clinton win in the state, Democrats swept eight of the state's nine House seats and the governorship. Two years later, capitalizing on disaffection with the hyper-liberal experimentation of the new governor Mike Lowry and with President Clinton, the GOP swept back. Republican freshmen Jack Metcalf and Doc Hastings, who won districts in the rural northwest and central parts of the state respectively, are generally considered safe this year. But White and Tate are both endangered, as is Linda Smith in her blue-collar district in the Southwest. George Nethercutt, slayer of House Speaker Tom Foley, is in for a tough fight in the farmland to the east.

For most of the Republicans, it's a relief at least to have their opposition finally personified in a Democratic candidate. It is the misfortune of Randy Tate that, in his case, the candidate happens to be a young, smooth-talking lawyer named Adam Smith. When the moderator for a Tate–Smith debate slips and says that Smith graduated high school in 1993 (really 1983) it's an understandable mistake. Tate won a state House seat at age 22, Smith a state Senate seat at 25 and both are now just over 30. Tate, balding with bright, almost infant-like blue eyes, is a conservative Christian who quickly earned the affection and respect of his colleagues in Congress. He is canny, energetic—and running against stiff odds in a district with as fine a partisan balance as any in the nation.

BY November, the AFL–CIO will have bought more than a $1 million-worth of blows to Tate's solar plexus on TV. Combine that with Smith's war-chest of roughly $600,000 and Tate stands to get outspent as an incumbent—not the way it's supposed to work. The energy of Smith's campaign clearly comes from the attack ads. In debates, there is almost a passivity to him; the unions, after all, are doing the real work. His positive agenda is a yawner—"working well with Republicans as well as Democrats"; campaign-finance reform; balancing the budget;

Mr. Lowry is NR*'s national political reporter.*

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and, finally, preserving middle-class entitlements. Smith tends even to soft-pedal his criticisms on Medicare, the scorching attacks already having been made on his behalf.

Republicans have recovered some on Medicare, but it's still best for the GOP to change the subject, which Tate does.

The safest bet is that Republicans and Democrats will split the four tightly contested seats, a result that would mean a tough night for the GOP nationwide

In the state Senate, Smith voted for a $1.2-billion tax increase, and Tate never lets him forget it. He also hits Smith for voting "against your right to defend yourself against a criminal in your own home." (Hardly the whole story, but the Queensbury rules were discarded here long ago.) Tate is doing everything else right in his sprawling district; he is on the popular side of the hot-button local issue, opposing a third runway at Sea-Tac airport, and his campaign organization is running on full cylinders. The trouble is that in this district, in 1996, even a perfect campaign may not be enough.

White, in his more uniformly suburban district to the north, has struck a more moderate stance than Tate. In the vote ratings of just about every interest group, White scores no lower than 20 per cent or higher than 80. But if he is less ideological than Tate, he is the same brand of politician. Both represent the Seattle suburb's libertarian distaste for government, its young, cutting-edge feel, and its contempt for status-quo politicians. "They are the new generation of Republicans," says pollster Frank Luntz. "They speak a language that the 30-somethings can understand. They are ideological without being strident."

White's re-election tack is more determinedly positive than Tate's. The advantage of his approach is that it makes it easier for him to claim the ground as the non-partisan, sensible candidate. The downside is it doesn't deflect attention away from himself the way attacking his opponent would (Tate has managed to make this shift and regain some momentum). The Democrat, Jeff Coopersmith, won a bitter primary and is vulnerable on several fronts (he just recently moved into the district, and made a series of mistakes in a recent case as a King County prosecutor). A nice fit for his district, White certainly can beat him, but it may depend on his ability to bloody Coopersmith and smile at the same time.

George Nethercutt runs in a different environment. His district is a five-hour's drive from Seattle and its corner coffee-bars, in the farmland of the eastern-most part of the state. Black ribbons of single-lane highways cut through the rolling wheat fields, the soil so rich it looks almost like cake batter. In the middle is Spokane with 60 per cent of the district's population. A Republican wins here by holding down the Democratic margin in the city, then wiping up among the conservative farmers everywhere else. Nethercutt did it two years ago against Tom Foley, and should be able to do it again.

But the AFL–CIO has been at work here too. In the much smaller Spokane media market, it has dumped an estimated $450,000 since May. Recently, Nethercutt had trouble buying ad space on one TV station because the unions had gobbled up so much of it. Nonetheless, Nethercutt has drawn a relatively weak opponent. Democrats had such a hard time recruiting in the wake of the GOP sweep of 1994, at one point they took out a personal ads in the newspapers soliciting candidates. They wound up with Judy Olson, a 50-year old wheat farmer, who personifies the difficulty of duplicating Clinton's success at the local level.

First, Olson loses the personality competition with Nethercutt. The 52-year old incumbent with a professorial bearing is so soothing he could do a credible imitation of Mr. Rogers. Second, Clinton can easily take credit for GOP congressional accomplishments. But when Olson repeatedly agrees with Nethercutt in the course of calling him an extremist it just seems bizarre. Finally, Clinton can walk a glib tight-rope of seemingly contradictory positions. Olson can't. She wallops Nethercutt for cutting Medicare, then says the system needs serious overhaul, then says she hasn't studied the issue enough to know what that might look like. Got it?

But Nethercutt, who had Washington insiders worried with his seeming complacency earlier this year, is still vulnerable. The final endangered Republican is Linda Smith, the self-anointed sword of campaign-finance reform who vows to smite all the unrighteous, Republican and Democrat alike. Her grandstanding has made her as popular as a skunk in GOP circles in D.C. She got a shock when her opponent finished strong in September's open primary, but she is a tireless campaigner and her populism plays well in her working-class district. Smith, alas, will probably survive.

The safest bet is that Republicans and Democrats will split the four tightly contested seats, a result that would mean a tough night for the GOP nationwide, but hardly a debacle. For Democrats to take all four would signal a national tide not yet in evidence here or elsewhere (and also depends on dampened GOP turn-out as disastrous election results pour in early from the East). This year is charged with none of the nation-wide anti-incumbent, anti-status quo feeling that informed elections in 1992 and 1994. Instead the focus is particular, local. In this atmosphere, it's even possible that Tate's relentless campaigning, White's suburban-dad demeanor, Nethercutt's soft-spoken reasonableness, and Smith's irritating populism will be just enough to squeeze them all over the finish line.

WHAT would such a victory mean? In the positive sense, it wouldn't prove much beyond Rick White's credentials as a good neighbor. But it would at least be an implicit rejection of the old-style liberalism motivating the AFL–CIO's ad barrage. After $35 million the unions still wouldn't have created a groundswell for a return to the pre-1994, Democratic Congress. And with the liberal base energized, with Republicans exposed on Medicare and saddled with a ineffectual presidential candidate, this may be the best chance for the Democrats to go back-to-the-future for some time. For the union-left, what's being played out in Washington state this year may be the equivalent of the Battle of the Bulge, a furious offensive that, should it fail, proves to be something of a last stand. □

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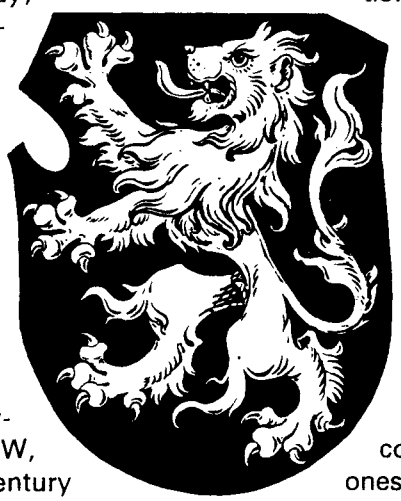
Traditional Catholicism Is Back! In Force!

Not long ago it was assumed that traditional Catholicism in the U.S. had no intellectual standing, was inconsequential, and could safely be ignored. After all, it was said, there aren't even enough intelligent traditional Catholics to support a magazine of ideas. That was around 1977, when liberal Protestants had *The Christian Century*, liberal Catholics had *Commonweal* and *America*, evangelicals had *Christianity Today*, and Jews had *Commentary*, but traditional Catholics had nothing comparable. Yes, traditional Catholics had newspapers and various highly specialized periodicals, but no general-interest magazine of ideas, an indispensable thing to have because ideas have consequences, but *only if* they reach the generally-educated reader. Such was the sorry state of traditional Catholicism.



Defying all the odds and naysayers, the NEW OXFORD REVIEW, with its name taken from the 19th-century Oxford Movement, was founded in 1977. When shortly thereafter Pope John Paul II appeared on the scene, and lowered the boom on dissenting theologian Hans Küng and providentially began his crusade to revitalize the Faith, we at the NEW OXFORD REVIEW immediately supported the Holy Father.

Although, curiously, we were *Anglo*-Catholic, we ran full-page ads with the shockingly unfashionable headline, "Support the Pope." Those ads, plus the novelty of Anglicans supporting a muscular Pope, attracted the attention of *Newsweek*, which did an article on us, noting our "childlike exuberance" and saying it's "probably only a matter of time" before we, like Newman of Oxford Movement fame, "drop anchor in Rome." With our October 1983 issue, we fulfilled that prophecy by becoming *Roman* Catholic.

If the NEW OXFORD REVIEW has only one achievement, it's this: At a critical time we proved that a high-grade magazine of ideas which supports a forceful papacy *could* exist, and that traditional Catholicism was *not* intellectually moribund in the U.S.

Happily, today there are many such magazines. Each has a distinct personality, but taken together they unmistakably demonstrate that traditional Catholicism *is back* — and *in force*.

Indeed, traditional Catholicism is the dynamic force in the U.S. Catholic Church today. Significantly, there are now more traditional Catholic magazines of ideas than liberal Catholic ones. And the combined circulation of the traditional ones far exceeds that of the liberal ones. This likely means that, with grace and continued leadership from Rome, the ideas circulated in the traditional magazines will eventually become the dominant ideas in Catholic schools, colleges, and universities, and in seminaries and parishes. This will add up to a revolution in U.S. Catholicism.

But the liberals haven't given up, and are fighting back. We at the NEW OXFORD REVIEW, a monthly magazine acclaimed by the *Los Angeles Times* as "influential" and by *Our Sunday Visitor* as "thought-provoking," know that the battle of ideas is still far from won. We're pressing forward. To arm yourself for the battles ahead, subscribe today!

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Listening to Howard Phillips

KARINA ROLLINS

Roman Genn

NEW YORK CITY; RESTON, VA.

HAS there ever been a better time to be a third party? Liberals feel let down by Clinton, libertarians and traditionalist conservatives unenthusiastic about Dole. "Don't vote: it only encourages them," urges *Chronicles* magazine, and it is likely that many Americans won't. Nor is there any shortage of third parties. There's the Green Party and Ralph Nader, committed to saving the environment; the Libertarians and Harry Browne, committed to restoring liberty; the Reform Party and Ross Perot, committed to reforming government; the Natural Law Party and John Hagelin, committed to, ah, transcendental meditation and levitation; and the U.S. Taxpayers Party, committed to something *really* ambitious —returning our country to its original constitutional and Biblical principles.

Tough stuff, and in Plan A Patrick Buchanan was to have been the party's candidate. The night before the Republican convention in August, his supporters waited breathlessly in Escondido (to which he had been exiled from San Diego by the GOP organizers) to hear him announce he would leave the GOP and run on the Taxpayers ticket. Instead, Buchanan reaffirmed his commitment to the Republicans. Enter Howard Phillips.

Phillips is a burly, amiable man in his fifties, Harvard-educated. Born and raised a Jew, he became a devout Christian roughly twenty years ago. He was director of the U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) under Nixon, an experience that he says helped prepare him for his conversion.

"At OEO I was confronted with evil, pure and simple. . . . I was not there very long when I discovered that OEO was the warroom for those that were trying to overturn what had once been America. . . . I had a moral obligation to fight these things [the funding of extreme-left causes]," he remembers.

He eventually left OEO. Since 1974 he has been chairman of the Conservative Caucus, a grass-roots group fighting the Left. He is the author of several books—and now the U.S. Taxpayers Party's presidential candidate.

Asked about the future of Pat Buchanan, he says regretfully, merely giving a clinical diagnosis: "I think it's behind him. . . . I do think he could have become President had he established a base outside the [Republican] party and run as an independent."

Does, then, the USTP provide the new rallying ground for tried and true paleo-cons? As yet, it seems not. Most of them remained, if grudgingly, in the GOP with Pat, leaving the USTP without a solid base or any real name recognition.

But Howard Phillips is not downcast. He believes the USTP fills a real need. "We are the only party this century in America that believes what the Framers believed." Why, then, hasn't it had a larger appeal? To this he gives an answer with a poignancy worthy of Bob Dole: "Nobody knows that we exist. That is really the whole reason."

It may not be the *whole* reason. Michael Lewis of *The New Republic* described the USTP convention as an odoriferous circus. (Phillips wrote a letter to the editor denouncing Lewis's account, which had been admiring of Phillips personally.) But all third parties attract eccentrics and oddballs, and overheard at the convention were the usual conspiracy theories about fluoridated water (espoused by delegates politically opposed to bathing) and black UN helicopters. Conservative K. B. Forbes, the communications director, resigned in despair, lamenting that "the fringe of the fringe" had smuggled itself in.

The USTP's National Committee meeting in Reston is considerably tamer. Denunciations of the "New World Order" decorate the party's speeches, pamphlets, and platform, but Phillips downplays attacks on the IMF, WTO, World Bank, and big corporations. "What I'm talking about is the breakdown of accountability . . . the same kind of problem that was addressed in the American War for Independence." And there is a Revolutionary flavor to the gathering. Herb Titus, Phillips's congenial running-mate and a good speaker popular with the committee members, delivered a speech that might have come from Patrick Henry or Sam Adams, denouncing unaccountable power and drenched with invocations of the Almighty. It was greeted with evangelical fervor.

Phillips is addressing real concerns on the Right. And for those who are dismayed at Bob Dole's tentativeness on conservative issues *and* who are listening, he might seem like the answer. He is unabashedly pro-family, pro-life, and anti-tax; he supports measures against judicial excess; and he wants a moratorium on immigration until federal subsidies for immigrants are abolished. But the USTP is also protectionist and isolationist—a Buchananite party without the Prince of Denmark.

Does the USTP provide the new rallying ground for tried and true paleo-cons?

It is hard to assess its strength. Like all third (or fourth, or fifth) party leaders, Phillips is convinced that his will become the next major party. But that would require a collapse of the two-party system, or a mass exodus from the GOP. And if either occurred, it would probably raise Pat Buchanan from his resting-place in the media. And Buchanan would then be calling the shots.

The USTP treasurer has it right when she asks the party faithful to "be realistic, expect a miracle." □

Miss Rollins is NR*'s associate editor.*

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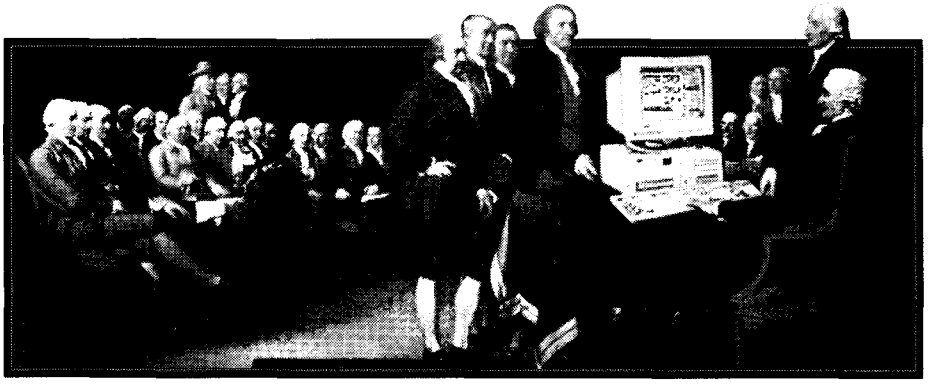

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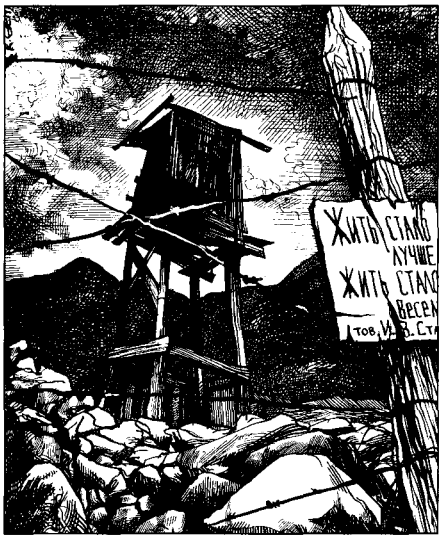
ON THE SCENE

Devil's Islands

ANDREW STUTTAFORD



Roman Genn

ARCHANGEL

IT may have voted for Yeltsin, but Archangel is still a very Soviet sort of place. There's a Lenin in the main square and another on the way out of town, just to make sure. Seven hundred miles north of Moscow, this once rich port city of 400,000 seems, at a glance, trapped in Brezhnev's dereliction—though there are hints of a commercial revival. There is plenty in the shops, and *someone* is buying all those Western cars.

History too is making a comeback. Gingerly at first, like the small boys passing their arms through the eternal flame at its World War II Memorial, Archangel is beginning to confront its Soviet past. A local cemetery finally acknowledges, and honors, the soldiers who died in Afghanistan. The regional museum displays not only stuffed and snarling wildlife, but also an impressive exhibit dedicated to the long Communist repression. This is only fitting. The Archangel *oblast* was one of the earliest Soviet killing fields. A remote land of forest and swamp, frozen for much of the year, it was an ideal place of exile and execution. By the late 1930s the region was dotted with prison camps and kulak settlements. But even in the first days of revolution, long before Stalin can be blamed, political prisoners were being gathered here. Many were sent just offshore, to the Solovetsky Islands, the "mother tumor," as Alexandr Solzhenitsyn put it, that metastasized into the Gulag.

In August, the islands are an easy journey, an hour's flight from Archangel. Blessed by a mild micro-climate, this archipelago of lakes and forests dozes in the warmth of a late northern summer. Dominated by a massive sixteenth-century monastery, the islands' main settlement is a trash-strewn, shabby home to a thousand people. Tumbledown wooden houses overlook a tranquil White Sea. Livestock wander down the main street.

Thirty thousand died here, perhaps more. The precise numbers are lost in the night and fog of a terror that spanned decades. What is certain is that when the Soviets came they found a place of pilgrimage, a once rich monastery supported by a neat little town. This would not do. The crosses went down and the prisoners came in. The cathedral made a good holding pen; its altar, naturally, was replaced by a latrine.

Strangely enough, in the early days there were still relics of Russia's more civilized past: scientific research, theater, even a newspaper. But these were diversions from the camp's principal, dirtier business. For, as Solzhenitsyn has noted, Solovetsky was the prototype for a new age. Could the socially hostile elements be forced to work? Absolutely. Could they be brutalized, starved, and shot? Why yes, that too. The prisoners arrived, in the hundreds, in the thousands, perhaps a hundred thousand in all.

On Sekirnaya Hill, the lighthouse–chapel became a punishment barracks of Gothic cruelty, a beacon for future totalitarians. Suitably distorted, it was a light, Moscow discovered, that could also be shone in the eyes of its clever friends. Maxim Gorky showed up to investigate reports of savagery. He found, he said, nothing amiss. So that was all right then. Later, the camp was closed, its lessons learned, its job done. The islands sank safely back into obscurity—in the USSR a half-memory, in the West not even that. The Solovetskys became a vacation spot, the monastery a picturesque backdrop for Komsomol backpackers. Houses were built over one mass grave, and of the other dead, the tens of thousands, nothing could be said.

At least, not until Gorbachev's later years. Then the monks began to return and so did the truth, slowly. Today, a boulder stands at one killing place. Unmarked and anonymous, it is unremarkable on a rocky island. It should not be so much a memorial as a work in progress, like a wooden cross on a recent grave. But for the Solovetsky dead there can be no more. A headstone needs names, and most of those are missing.

At the monastery the domes and crosses are back but the spirit is not. The monks seem downcast as they lead a drab procession out of their chapel. The wild Orthodox exuberance of the cathedral is lost. And the dead? They get a small museum at the back, an afterthought on an architectural tour. But it is a start. There are *details*, even, at last, some names, the names of prisoners, and the names of their tormentors: Ekmans, Kedrov, and the others.

Houses were built over one mass grave, and of the other dead, the tens of thousands, nothing could be said

"Kedrov?" Vladimir Mityn smiles, and the past again clouds over. "He was in Archangel. He only visited the islands two or three times." Mr. Mityn, the Director of Archangel's regional archives, is no revisionist. He just wants, he says, to be objective. *His* interest is in the kulaks, "richer" peasants like his grandparents, torn by the hundreds of

Andrew Stuttaford is a writer based in New York.

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thousands from southern villages and dumped in the forests, to log and to die. He leads expeditions into the hinterland searching for a trace of their settlements. There is not much to find: a ruined hut or a marked grave, if he is lucky.

For Russia's is the holocaust that worked, that devastated a continent, and then disappeared into a new ruling class. The society it leaves behind is hopelessly compromised, still tempted by a past that it has never been allowed to understand. While the survivors of the Gulag generations still live, there needs to be a reckoning, a Soviet Nuremberg which might influence the attitudes of the new Russia before it is too late.

But it will never happen. No one wants it. Not even Vladimir Mityn, a man who wanders through forests in search of history. "You see," he explains, "I was a Communist myself." □

Pot Luck

RICHARD BROOKHISER

Frederick Carlson

WASHINGTON, D.C.

I AM a conservative Republican. The only reason I didn't vote for Barry Goldwater was because I was nine years old at the time. I am for medical marijuana because of my politics. But I'm also for it because I've had to use it.

As a political journalist, I mark the milestones of my life by election cycles. On the eve of Ronald Reagan's election I got married. On the eve of Bill Clinton's I got testicular cancer. The treatment was straightforward—an operation, followed by a rather harsh form of chemotherapy. Any chemotherapy is harsh, because all chemotherapy is poison. You're dumping poison into your bloodstream, killing millions of cells, in order to kill the thousands of malignant cells, which will not recover. Because it is poison, the body wants to get rid of it. That's why chemotherapy causes nausea. To deal with this, I took the latest anti-nausea drugs, including Zofran, and I also did self-hypnosis and mental imaging. These all worked—up to a point. But beyond that point, I needed extra help, and so I smoked marijuana.

I had smoked marijuana maybe ten times in college, during the Seventies. I even inhaled. I stopped because I found I didn't like smoke, or being high, or the conversation of pot-heads. I turned to it when I got cancer because marijuana gives healthy people an appetite, and prevents people who are nauseated from throwing up. None of my doctors or nurses at New York University Medical Center, or Memorial Sloan-Kettering, discouraged me from doing this. They had all had patients who had used marijuana to fight nausea, and who had reported good results. I had good results too. Because of the marijuana, my last two courses of chemotherapy were almost nausea-free.

There was only one problem—I had to become a criminal to do this.

Cancer patients are not the only people in this bind. AIDS patients who have the wasting syndrome report that marijuana gives them an appetite again. Glaucoma patients find that it arrests the deterioration of their eyes. People with chronic migraines, epilepsy, and multiple sclerosis use it to relieve their symptoms. A good summary of all these experiences can be found in *Marihuana: The Forbidden Medicine*, by Lester Grinspoon MD, and James B. Bakalar. Dr. Grinspoon is a professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, and the book is published by Yale University Press, so this is not something downloaded from the Internet. But any sick person who wants to use marijuana to help himself has to break the law. I'm a member of the media elite, who lives in Manhattan, so I wasn't at high risk. But plenty of sick people get arrested, and plenty of them go to jail.

There are three common arguments against the medical use of marijuana, all of them faulty.

The first is that THC, the main active ingredient in the drug, is available in a legally prescribable pill form. But the pill has problems. It's expensive. Because it's a pill, and therefore slower acting, people have trouble adjusting the dosage; they often find themselves taking too much. It also seems to cause high levels of anxiety and depression. In my case, I thought treating nausea with a pill was not a bright idea.

The second argument is that smoked marijuana has never been tested scientifically. This is not entirely true. One test was done at UCLA in 1970 for the Los Angeles Police Department, which wanted to prove that pot smoking dilated the pupils. The researchers found that it contracted the pupils; they also discovered that marijuana relieved pressure within the eyeball. This is why marijuana is useful in treating glaucoma.

But it is true that it is difficult to test marijuana. That is because the government makes it so. The case of Dr. Donald Abrams at San Francisco General Hospital is instructive. Dr. Abrams is an AIDS researcher who wants to test the efficacy of smoked marijuana in treating the wasting syndrome. For more than two years, he tried to get marijuana legally from the National Institute on Drug Abuse for his experiments—to no avail. So doctors cannot prescribe marijuana because it hasn't been tested, but doctors aren't allowed to do any tests. This is a classic Catch-22.

Any sick person who wants to use marijuana to help himself has to break the law

The third objection is that by legalizing marijuana in one area, we will be setting a bad example to a society engaged in a war on drugs. In fact we will be setting no example at all. The availability of morphine in hospitals is not the reason

Mr. Brookhiser, an NR *senior editor, testified before the Subcommittee on Crime of the House Judiciary Committee.*

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people smoke crack. A hairless cancer patient with an IV tube in his arm is not a come-on for a pusher.

The connection between the issue of medical marijuana and the war on drugs runs the other way. The reason we don't allow medical use is because of the spill-over of an extreme war-time psychology. *National Review* has taken a stand on the war on drugs, but it is not relevant here. If you think the war is wrong, then the ban on medical marijuana is simply one symptom among many of its excess and folly. If you think the war is right, then the ban is an irrelevant and over-zealous off-shoot, like fighting the Kaiser in World War I by changing the German names of Midwestern streets.

I want to end by addressing my fellow Republicans. My support for medical marijuana is not a contradiction of my principles, but an extension of them. I am for law and order. But crime has to be fought intelligently, and the law disgraces itself when it harasses the sick. I am for traditional virtues—I support the Christian Coalition, and I supported the Moral Majority. But carrying your beliefs to unjust ends is not moral, it is philistine. Most important, I believe in getting government off people's backs. We should include the backs of sick people trying to help themselves.

My cancer is gone now; I was lucky. God forbid that anyone in this room should ever need chemotherapy. But statistics tell us that many of us will. Let me assure you that, whatever you think now, or however you vote, if that moment comes to you, you will turn to marijuana. Extend that liberty to your fellow citizens. □

Quilted Logic

JAMES BOWMAN

Roman Genn

WASHINGTON, D.C.

"YOU ARE gone but your guilt remains behind." Taken aback, I paused for a moment in reading the message scrawled on one of the panels of the AIDS quilt. For just a moment in my perusal of this acreage of brightly colored memorial displayed on the national Mall, I thought that someone had broken with the relentlessly political spirit of the occasion. But no, it turned out it was not a "g" but a "q"—his quilt not his guilt which remained behind.

The one letter's difference seemed typical of the delicate ambiguities occasionally to be met with during Quilt Weekend in Washington. Another came on Friday evening at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Arlington, when the outgoing president of PFLAG, the support group for parents, friends, and families of lesbians and gays, announced the arrival of the famous daughter of Sonny and Cher. "I'd like," she said, "to introduce Chastity."

A forlorn hope, I fear. Chastity, the active lesbian, was the hit of the evening (together with her mama); chastity the Christian virtue was an embarrassing relation the very mention of whose name would have spoiled the feast. Cher, it should be said, looked terrific when she arrived in a fetching black bib overall, black high heels, white top, and black Mexican-style vest to "complete her coming-out process." Confessing that she had been surprised, at first, by her own "unCherlike" (i.e., uncool) attitude to her daughter's homosexuality, Cher went on to say that she was glad to have had the chance to become "a little more tolerant person." Besides, she told the PFLAG members, "so many of you are older and that's *so cool*!"—because "when people see *you*, it's not like they're seeing guys in drag on Christopher Street."

What a comfort to her that they could be dowdy and suburban without being like the "good Republican" next door. They loved it. Cher discovered that she couldn't go wrong bashing Republicans. Likewise, at the AIDS Candlelight March the following evening, one of the most popular slogans was an assurance that the dead would be remembered "with our votes."

Somehow I don't think those who cheered lustily at this were Dole voters. Some of them, indeed, must have been among the ACT UP members who had demonstrated at the Dole–Kemp headquarters earlier in the day by chanting: "Dole, Kemp, you can't hide/We charge you with genocide." Yet to many, pointing out that such language is perhaps a bit exaggerated would seem insensitive to the plight of those whose political voice depends on waving the bloody quilt of their victimhood.

Mind you, it is hard not to sympathize. The military language of "victories" and "losses" seems almost inescapable in the context of the memorialization of so many young men (for the victims are overwhelmingly male), so much loved, and so fondly remembered. It was not a line of metaphor neglected by the quiltmakers either. One of their publicity logos pictured a needle and thread with the slogan: "Not all battles are fought with a sword." Among the military allusions on the quilt panels themselves I even found quoted the last two stanzas of Lt. Col. John McCrae's "In Flanders Fields," with their famous exhortation to "Take up our quarrel with the foe." It seems almost churlish to point out that the heroes of hedonism have been killed not by their putative enemies but by each other.

Just as moving as the tributes to the dead, however, was a sort of revival meeting called the Second Annual National Coming Out of Homosexuality Day, sponsored by Gary Bauer's Family Research Council. As part of this effort, an opposition group to PFLAG called PFOX (Parents, Family, and Friends of Ex-Gays) convened on the West Front steps of the Capitol. This small group of ex-homosexuals and their supporters spoke to an even smaller group of journalists (one of whom turned out to be a heckler from Lesbian and Gay New York), offering up their testimony about years spent "in the lifestyle" and more years spent painfully trying to get themselves out of it. It was heart rending. For

(Continued on page 64)

Mr. Bowman is American editor of the Times Literary Supplement.

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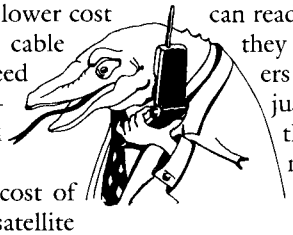
GEKKO

IF you've been locked up in a basement for the past several months, then you might not be aware that there are several companies desperately trying to sell you a home receiver for satellite television. The idea is that you can get more channels at a lower cost than you can with your cable system, though you still need either cable or a conventional antenna for the local stations. A brutal price war has driven down the cost of getting direct broadcast satellite (DBS) TV to $200 or less, from $700 just a few months ago.



There are three major competitors in the business. Hughes DirecTV and US Satellite Broadcasting have a joint venture to broadcast complementary channels from the same satellites. Hughes is owned by GM shareholders, USSB is backed by Hubbard Broadcasting and George Soros. Number Three is PrimeStar, which is owned by a group of cable companies, and whose subscribers need big (36 inch) dishes. Ted Turner, now a mild-mannered corporate bureaucrat at Time Warner, has been quoted as saying that PrimeStar "isn't a real business," presumably because technology has passed it by.

Then there's Echostar Communications of Englewood, Colo. Like the others, it's losing money while buying a customer base. Unlike the others, it has no rich parents. Echostar finances the manufacture of the equipment consumers need to get its signals. DirecTV and USSB have a group of suppliers to do this for them. Echostar has many fewer distributors than the DirecTV–USSB joint venture, which also has a marketing deal with AT&T. It has a time bomb in the form of a zero-coupon junk bond, and has made no secret of the fact that it needs a backer if it is to get to the cash-flow break-even point. Thanks to the price war, that point is further away than ever.

So you'd expect that USSB stock would be rising, and Echostar's falling. In fact, Echostar has been outperforming USSB ever since the price war started in earnest. Why? Because in the media investing world, hope and hype can trump value. Echostar's management has been talking to potential saviors such as Sprint and Tele-Communications, Inc. But these people can read a balance sheet. Why should they bail out Echostar stockholders at close to $30 a share when, just by waiting a year or so, they could pick it up for maybe single digits? In other words, Echostar, whose stock symbol is DISH, is likely to get dished by the market long before USSB. The winners will be consumers and short-sellers.

■ I have to admit my Wall Street libertarianism is sorely tried by the gambling business. A few years ago I went down to Atlantic City at the invitation of one of Donald Trump's institutional creditors for a weekend at the Trump Taj Mahal. A more depressing time I cannot imagine. While I came out $300 ahead on blackjack, watching a lot of hard-luck cases spend the rent and the kids' tuition to bail out the Donald—sorry, I just don't find it entertaining.

So I am always open to negative stories about the "gaming" industry, and I think there may be one in Sun International Hotels. This was one of the hot stock issues this year. Sun started in South Africa, where in the apartheid days it operated a casino-based resort in the "tribal homeland" of Bophuthatswanaland, close enough to Johannesburg to attract daytripping and weekend gamblers. Sun's founder, Sol Kerzner, may have let his entrepreneurial impulses get just a tad out of hand. While working out a deal with another homeland, Transkei, he allegedly paid a $2-million bribe to the homeland's leaders. For some reason, something went awry, and in 1991 Kerzner was wanted in Transkei on charges of bribery, corruption, and fraud. The South African government did not extradite Kerzner in response to the Transkei charges. Now, there are moves to reopen the question of why the original investigation was not pursued.

"The following investments have become hazardous to our wealth."

This is not just of academic and historical interest back here in the United States. In August, Sun, now headquartered in the Bahamas but still under Kerzner's control, acquired Griffin Gaming & Entertainment for about $210 million in stock. Kerzner and Sun International are also part of a venture to open a casino in Connecticut to compete with the one operated by the Pequot Indians.

Now anyone who has watched the *Godfather* movies or *Casino* knows that the state gaming commissions are under some pressure to ensure that people in the casino business don't do things like bribe public officials in the United States or elsewhere. The standards of proof of guilt are very low in these cases—it's really easy to lose your license or not get one in the first place. But maybe Sun International is different. It would be interesting to know how the questions concerning Mr. Kerzner were resolved in the states where Sun will be operating.

■ If you think the U.S. equity market is valued somewhat above reality, consider the Russian market. The Moscow stocks, by and large, have held onto the gains they've made since the Communists lost the presidential election this summer. However, industrial production has fallen almost 7 per cent since last year, while transport volumes declined by about 20 per cent in the first half of this year compared to the first half of '95. Only three-quarters of the forecast tax revenue has been collected by the government so far this year. Talk about a country of short-sale candidates. —JOHN DIZARD

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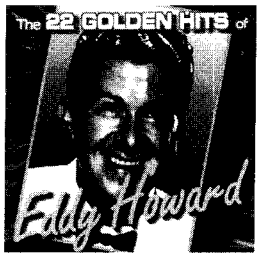

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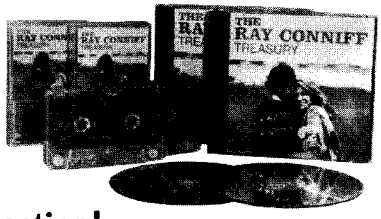

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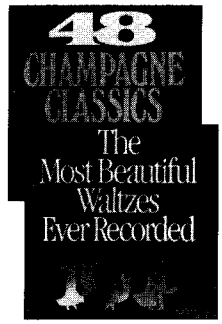

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Is Patriarchy Inevitable?

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IN five hundred years the world, in all likelihood, will have become homogenized. The thousands of varied societies and their dramatically differing methods of socialization, cohesion, family, religion, economy, and politics will have given way to a universal culture. Fortunately, cultural anthropologists have preserved much of our present diversity, which may keep our descendants from too hastily allowing their natural human ego- and ethno-centricity to conclude that theirs is the only way to manage a society.

However, the anthropological sword is two-edged. While diversity is certainly apparent from anthropological investigations, it is also clear that there are realities which manifest themselves no matter what the varied forms of the aforementioned institutions. Because these universal realities cut across cultural lines, they are crucial to our understanding of what society *by its nature* is and, perhaps, of what human beings are. It is important, then, that we ask why, when societies differ as much as do those of the Ituri Pygmy, the Jivaro, the American, the Japanese, and a thousand others, some institutions are universal.

It is always the case that the universal institution serves some need rooted in the deepest nature of human beings. In some cases the explanation of universality is obvious (e.g., why every society has methods of food gathering). But there are other universalities which are apparent, though without any obvious explanation. Of the thousands of societies on which we have any evidence stronger than myth (a form of evidence that would have us believe in cyclopes), there is no evidence that there has ever been a society failing to exhibit three institutions:

1. *Primary hierarchies always filled primarily by men.* A Queen Victoria or a Golda Meir is always an exception and is always surrounded by a government of men. Indeed, the constraints of royal lineage may produce more female societal leaders than does democracy—there were more female heads of state in the first two-thirds of the sixteenth century than there were in the first two-thirds of the twentieth.

2. *The highest status roles are male.* There are societies in which the women do most of the important economic work and rear the children, while the men seem mostly to hang loose. But, in such societies, hanging loose is given higher status than any non-maternal role primarily served by women. No doubt this is partly due to the fact that the males hold the positions of power. However, it is also likely that high-status roles are male not primarily because they are male (ditch-digging is male and low status), but because they are high status. The high status roles are male because they possess—for whatever socially determined reason in whichever specific society—high status. This high status exerts a more powerful influence on males than it does on females. As a result, males are more willing to sacrifice life's other rewards for status dominance than are females.

In their *Not in Our Genes*, Richard Lewontin, Leon Kamin, and Stephen Rose—who, along with Stephen Jay Gould are the best-known defenders of the view that emphasizes the role of environment and de-emphasizes

Mr. Goldberg is Chairman of the Department of Sociology at CUNY, and the author of Why Men Rule.

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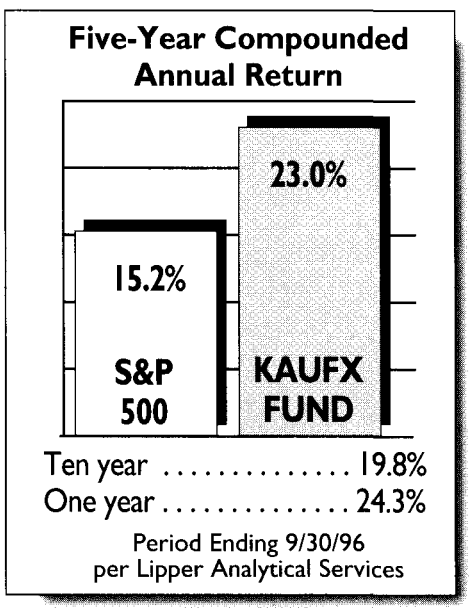

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that of heredity—attempt to find fault with my work by pointing out that most family doctors in the Soviet Union are women. However, they acknowledge that in the Soviet Union "family doctoring [had] lower status than in the United States."

Which is precisely the point. No one doubts that women can be doctors. The question is why doctors (or weavers, or load bearers, etc.) are primarily women only when being a doctor is given lower status than are certain roles played mostly by men—and furthermore, why, even when this is the case (as in Russia) the upper hierarchical positions relevant to that specific area are held by men.

3. *Dominance in male–female relationships is always associated with males.* "Male dominance" refers to the feeling, of both men and women, that the male is dominant and that the woman must "get around" the male to attain power. Social attitudes may be concordant or discordant with the reality of male dominance. In our own society there was a time when the man's "taking the lead" was positively valued by most women (as 30s' movies attest); today such a view is purportedly detested by many. But attitudes toward male-dominance behavior are causally unimportant to the reality they judge—and are not much more likely to eliminate the reality than would a social dislike of men's being taller be able to eliminate men's being taller.

OVER the past twenty years, I have consulted every original ethnographic work invoked to demonstrate an exception to these societal universalities. Twenty years ago many textbooks spoke cavalierly of "matriarchies" and "Amazons" and pretended that Margaret Mead had claimed to find a society in which sex roles were reversed. Today no serious anthropologist is willing to claim that any specific society has ever been an exception.

It is often claimed that "modern technology renders the physiological differentiation irrelevant." However, there is not a scintilla of evidence that modernization alters the

No Belles: The Second Sex

IN an attempt to validate the claim that high genius is, with few exceptions, limited to the male sex, there is probably no better material available than the distribution of the Nobel Prize among men and women. As is well known, the Swedish inventor and industrialist Alfred Nobel, in his will, written in 1895, just about a year before his death, provided that the annual returns of his great fortune be divided into five equal parts and awarded as prizes to those who have lately made the most important contributions in the categories of Physics, Chemistry, Medicine, Literature, and Peace. Since 1969, an additional prize in Economics in memory of Alfred Nobel has been awarded by the Bank of Sweden.

Let us first take a look at the Nobel Prizes in the Natural Sciences during the years 1943–1995, i.e., after the Second World War, when we find ever-increasing numbers of female university students. Among a total number of 102 laureates in Physics after World War II, just one (Maria Goeppert-Mayer, 1963) was female out of 83 laureates in Chemistry, likewise just one (Dorothy Crowfoot Hodgkin, 1964) was female. Among as many as 120 laureates in Medicine, there were 6 women (Gerty Theresa Cori, 1947; Rosalyn Yalow, 1977; Barbara McClintock, 1983; Rita Levi-Montalcini, 1986; Gertrude Belle Elion, 1988; and Christiane Nüsslein-Volhard, 1995). If we also consider the laureates of the Bank of Sweden Prize in Economics in memory of Alfred Nobel, we find 38 recipients—none female.

With only 8 women (2.3 per cent) out of 343 Nobel laureates in Science and Economics in the last 50 years, we can safely assert: *For research in its highest power, testicles are, as a rule, required.*

Of course, if we consider the situation before World War II, i.e., during the years 1901–1939, we then find that the situation for women is connected with one single name, viz. Curie. Marie Curie and her husband Pierre Curie together received one half of the Prize in Physics in 1903 (the other half went to Henri Becquerel). After the death of her husband, Marie Curie—by herself—received the Prize in Chemistry in 1911. Finally, Marie Curie's daughter, Irène Joliot-Curie, received the Prize in Chemistry in 1935, together with her husband, Frédéric Joliot. Among 46 laureates in Physics, there was 1 woman; among 40 laureates in Chemistry, 2 were women; whereas all 42 laureates in Medicine were men; this means 3 female laureates among a total of 128. The female representation is exactly the same (2.3 per cent) as after World War II, and the conclusion must be the same: *First-class research normally requires a high level of blood testosterone.*

NOT surprisingly, if we consider the Prize for Literature, the representation of women is considerably better than in the sciences. Out of a total number of 92 laureates in Literature in the period 1901–1995, 8 were women (Selma Lagerlöf, 1909; Grazia Deledda, 1926; Sigrid Undset, 1928; Pearl Buck, 1938; Gabriela Mistral, 1945; Nelly Sachs, 1966; Nadine Gordimer, 1991; and Toni Morrison, 1993). This makes 8.7 per cent.

Still, out of a total of 563 Nobel laureates in the Natural Sciences, Economics and Literature in the period, 1901–1995, we find only 19 women or 3.4 per cent. The conclusion that high genius is a male characteristic therefore seems to hold true even if literature is included. —GÖSTA WRANGLÉN

Mr. Wranglén is a Professor Emeritus in Electrochemistry at the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm.

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CONTENTS

Monumental Takeover	page 1
West World	page 2
Point Taken	page 4
Victim Quest	page 6
Big Deal?	page 7
West Coast Observer	page 8

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Monumental Takeover

MICHELLE MALKIN

"THE Grand Staircase–Escalante National Monument could well be a defining legacy of the Clinton Presidency," actor-producer-environmental gadfly Robert Redford recently proclaimed.

Indeed. The abrupt decision in late September to carve out a national monument in Utah's red-rock wilderness is perhaps the most panoramically Clintonesque gesture to date—not only for its blatant political expediency, but also for its photo-op finesse, circumvention of the public process, and sweeping exercise of government coercion.

On September 18, at the rim of the Grand Canyon in neighboring Arizona, President Clinton invoked the ninety-year-old Antiquities Act to monumentalize 1.7 million acres of southwest Utah. Under the Act, resources like "objects of historic or scientific interest" can be set aside by executive order, which does not require congressional approval, scientific review, or public input.

The 2,700-square-mile tract of designated land is roughly the size of Delaware. "On this site, on this remarkable site," declared Clinton seventy miles north of the remarkable site, "God's handiwork is everywhere in the natural beauty of the Escalante Canyons and in the Kaiparowits Plateau, in the rock formations that show, layer by layer, billions of years of geology, in the fossil record of dinosaurs and other prehistoric life, in the remains of ancient American civilizations like the Anacosi Indians." Clinton failed to note in his grandiose speech that the land is also a place so grim and desolate that Hollywood filmed *Planet of the Apes* there a quarter-century ago.

SPEAKING of Hollywood, Redford, Vice President Al Gore, Colorado Governor Roy Romer, and assorted state officials attended the carefully staged designation ceremony in Arizona. So did a naturalist named Terry Tempest Williams, who pronounced: "These lands are alive. This action fully restores our souls." Yet nary a soul from Utah came to worship with the President and his entourage. None had been notified. Incredibly, on the eve of the announcement, even the Interior Department could not provide details of exactly which lands were being designated. And while Clinton claimed credit for protecting "the natural heritage of Utah's children" from a safe cliff across the state border, Utah residents were up in arms over this unprecedented, impromptu federal land grab that threatens Utah schoolchildren as well as jobs.

There are nearly 200,000 acres of schools trust land within the monument area—underneath which lie billions of tons of coal. The Utah Geological Survey estimates the net present value of that untapped energy reserve—under the land earmarked for education—at between $640 million and $1.1 billion. And Utah state officials say that proposed underground mining by Andalex Resources, a Dutch company, would generate some nine hundred jobs for the local economy.

The enraged citizens of Utah refused to bear these sacrifices, forced on them in the name of environmental protection, silently. In the center of the designated monument area, residents of the small town of Kanab flew their flags at half-mast and shut down the town. More than a thousand people converged at the Kanab High School gymnasium to watch Clinton's televised announcement. Some in the audience held up placards that pleaded: "Do you feel our pain?" Other released black balloons and waved signs reading, "Shame on You, Clinton." And in nearby Escalante, President Clinton and Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt were hanged in effigy. Residents also sold "Clintonburgers (100 per cent chicken)."

As Utah Rep. Jim Hansen, chairman of the U.S. House Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Lands, noted: "This impulsive act, simply meant as a political tool in this year's presidential election, is anti-

(Continues on page West-4)

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WEST WORLD

■ Dismayed by reports that his lead in the polls is dropping toward single digits, including in California, President Clinton is reported to be considering a bold move to close his own "gender gap": a federal law mandating two-day hospital stays for hernia patients.

■ In a gesture meant to embarrass supporters of Proposition 209, the anti-quota initiative on the California ballot, liberal students at California State University, Northridge, imported former Louisiana Klansman David Duke (and paid him $4,000) to represent the pro-initiative position in a campus debate. Word is that conservative students wisely scrapped plans for a similar debate over the initiative to legalize medical use of marijuana after it was announced the pro-grass position would be argued by Charles Manson.

■ Focus-group research has yielded valuable information to attorneys for the Brown and Goldman families in the O. J. Simpson civil trial. Most importantly: negativity is a turn-off. Attorneys will therefore steer clear of personal attacks on the defendant, confining themselves to issues of evidence. They will avoid using terms such as "murder," "bodies" and—especially—"bozo." They have also ruled out using the blood evidence that was thought so crucial in the criminal trial. Women in the focus groups say that blood grosses them out. Attorneys remain divided as to how they will refer to Simpson. One group says that they should call him "Mr. Simpson," which reverberates well with younger women and handicapped men. A second is holding out for "the defendant," which appeals to older women and Pacific Islanders.

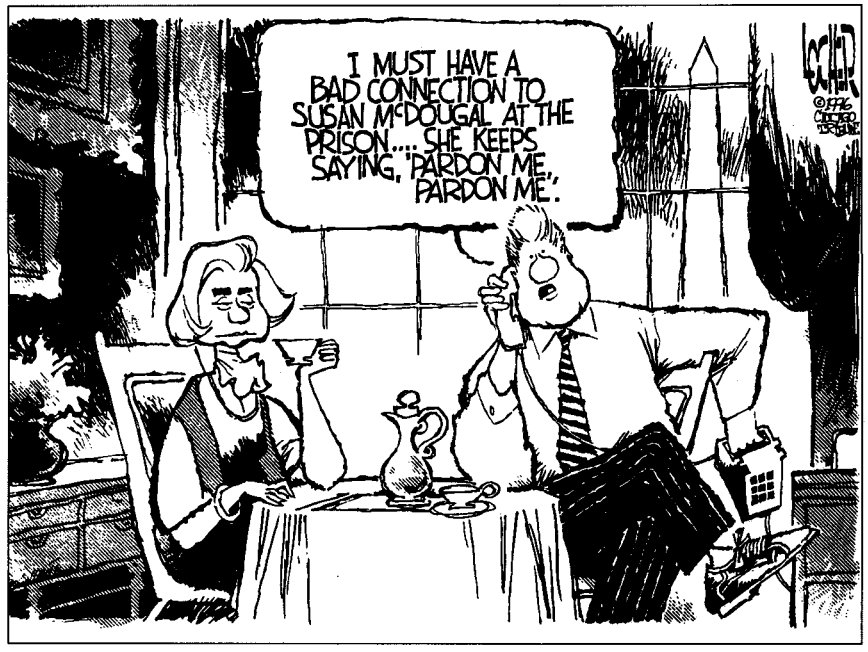
■ Movie director Quentin Tarantino took umbrage at Bob Dole's criticism of his popular 1994 film, *Pulp Fiction*. Indeed, the young director condemned Dole, in so many words, as a numskull, and demanded a public apology. Tarantino was especially angered that Dole had based his criticism on film reviews rather than shelling out seven bucks to see the movie firsthand. We still aren't sure whether Tarantino himself paid to attend the function at which Dole made his critical remarks, or relied on second-hand news reports.

■ It's back to the drawing board for promoters of Oliver Stone's latest creation, a movie about pornographer Larry Flynt, scheduled for release at Christmas. Honchos at the Motion Picture Association of America objected to a promo-poster on which the actor playing Flynt, Woody Harrelson, appears in an American-flag diaper. A spokesman for the studio said the producers want to "make sure our ad materials reflect the spirit of the movie and they are in good taste." Perhaps we should wait till the holidays before commenting. Then again, to avoid having to apologize, let's just leave our opinion to Quentin Tarantino.

■ Victor Morales—the high-school teacher challenging Phil Gramm for the U.S. Senate in Texas, and this year's pale imitation of *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*—directed some recent very un-Mr.-Smith-like remarks against Congressman Henry Bonilla of San Antonio. In brief, because Bonilla holds views different from those Morales thinks are required for genuine Hispanics, Morales called Bonilla a "chocolate chip," a "coconut," and a "wannabe white." Roundly criticized for this racist language by numerous Hispanic as well as white leaders around the state, Morales saw fit to apologize. However, the head of the League of United Latin American Citizens defended Morales's language as "say[ing] it like it is." Her main evidence of Bonilla's treachery: his votes against affirmative action. Proof indeed, of the healing power of affirmative action.

■ Bob Dole knew just how much trouble Republicans were in in California when he landed at John Wayne Airport in Orange County and found its name changed to Jane Fonda International.

■ In the months leading up to the November 5 election, the New West has been all astir over the nature of the family. First, the pending legal decision on so-called same-sex marriages in Hawaii led many state legislatures to debate outlawing recognition of such marriages. In



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California, public hearings are being held on limiting adoptions to legally married couples. In Utah, Mormon Church President Gordon Hinckley has called on women who can afford it to forego jobs in favor of raising children at home. And in Colorado, a Parental Rights Amendment would guarantee parents the right "to direct and control the upbringing, education, values, and discipline of their children." That measures like the latter are necessary—and highly controversial—indicates how much has changed in recent years. This was evident at a conference on the family held last month at the University of Chicago, where a typical view was espoused by a biblical-history professor from Fort Worth. He characterized the very idea of a "traditional family" as "crazy": "When they talk about the family, I say, what family? I don't know the family they are talking about." This guy's perplexity is, in turn, a good illustration of recent findings by Ohio State psychologist Philip Tetlock that liberal thought is more "complex" than conservative thought. But as another psychologist, Deborah Gruenfeld of Northwestern, has pointed out, complexity isn't always best or desirable: "When reality is actually cut and dried, complexity denotes confusion." Perhaps people who are confused about the family shouldn't be running the village.

■ According to the Western Journalism Center, the average teacher in California made $41,660 last year. The average employee of the California Teachers Association, on the other hand, made $58,065, or 39 per cent more than the average teacher, who picked up the tab for those average CTA salaries. In this light, the average taxpayer should be reluctant to accept the average CTA employee's arguments for more tax money to increase the salary of the average teacher. At least until the average teacher tells the average CTA employee to put his own house in order.

■ Included in the League of Conservation Voters' Dirty Dozen, a "hit list" of 12 congressmen the group most wants to defeat, is one Democrat: Gary Condit, of the Modesto area in California's Central Valley. At the top of the list of Condit's crimes, according to League president Deb Callahan, was his introduction of legislation that would require the government to compensate property owners when the government takes away or devalues their property by regulating it, in accordance with the Fifth Amendment. Many modern environmentalists, such as those in the League, treat the goals of conservation and property rights as mutually exclusive, because their "solutions" elevate natural resources to a level of value which punishes human concerns. Conservative candidates in both parties need to emphasize that conservation and property rights can be valued together—with incentives, for example, instead of sanctions. Americans support clean air and water, and want parks to take their kids to. But they need liberty, and assets, to enjoy them.

■ The executive editor of the *San Jose Mercury News*, Jerry Ceppos, is shocked, shocked, that the "Dark Alliance" series of articles run in his newspaper—chronicling the stories of two Nicaraguan sympathizers of the anti-Communist Contras in the 1980s, who were ultimately convicted of selling crack cocaine in Los Angeles—has led so many black Americans to conclude that the U.S. government was complicit in this drug dealing. Perhaps the irresponsible logo of the "Dark Alliance" series—the CIA symbol against a background of a crack smoker—had something to do with it? (We say "irresponsible," because the events chronicled by the *Mercury News* were publicized and investigated in the 1980s, and no evidence of CIA complicity was unearthed; nor did the *Mercury News* offer any new evidence.) Adding fuel to the fire were black politicians. Los Angeles Congresswoman Maxine Waters reacted to the series with a speech claiming that "people in high places were winking and blinking and our children were dying," and vowing "to make somebody pay for what they did to our community." Then Denver Mayor Wellington Webb, at a U.S. Conference of Mayors meeting in Santa Barbara on October 4, introduced a resolution calling for a congressional investigation into the questions raised by the "Dark Alliance" series. (Congress already investigated them, but never mind.) One Washington columnist even called for Nuremberg-type trials. So far, though, liberal politicians and the media have been largely uncritical of this racist paranoia. If they think it serves their short-term interests they are playing with fire.

■ When sixty thousand immigrants were nationalized by the Immigration and Nationalization Service in mass ceremonies in Los Angeles late this summer—in an attempt, truth be told, to meet a fiscal-year quota set by the Clinton administration—five thousand of these immigrants were concealing criminal records, some for rape and murder. "Give me your liars, your dealers, your burgling masses, yearning for a crime spree."

■ Responding to the failure of contemporary math education, which employs entertaining word problems and emphasizes "conceptual understanding," California's state Board of Education is now calling for a return to teaching basic math skills through traditional methods like rote memorization of multiplication tables. But the Board of Ed will not go unopposed by the establishment. Already in Southern California one trainer in "new math" methods has expressed alarm: "I'm worried that we're not going to have the opportunity to teach in the way that brain research supports." Maybe education bureaucrats should search fewer brains and test more urine.

■ With three suspects under arrest by the California Highway Patrol for smashing more than 250 car windows, President Clinton issued a statement to the car-owners assuring them he felt their pane.

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MALKIN
(Continued from page West-1)

education, anti-children, anti-environment, anti-wildlife, anti-recreation, anti-public inclusion, and anti-state of Utah." The sentiment was not merely partisan. A spokesman for Democratic Rep. Bill Orton, whose district lies in the designated monument lands, denounced Clinton's action as "purely political."

HE'S right. Folks across Utah value their natural resources and are fully capable of protecting them without coercion. Furthermore, legal safeguards preventing the rape of Utah's landscape, such as the Federal Land Planning Management Act and the National Environmental Protection Act, already abound. And with six national monuments, two national recreation areas, and all or part of five national forests, more than three-quarters of the state of Utah is already locked up by the Federal Government.

The idea of strip-mining in this hallowed ground prompted environmentalist howls that resonated in the White House. But the affected area lies miles away from the Escalante Canyon—out of sight and underground. Infrastructure would be minimal, dwarfed by the panoramic landscape. And by preventing the mining of some 62 billion tons of low-sulfur, low-polluting coal, the President's action may ultimately do more harm to the environment than good.

What now? The new Grand Staircase–Escalante National Monument will be managed by the Bureau of Land Management, which already owns the lands. But it's unclear what kinds of uses will be allowed. Utah officials—joining with county commissioners—filed suit in U.S. District Court against the Interior Department in early October, claiming that the Federal Government wants to set aside more areas for wilderness protection without adequate public consultation.

Meanwhile, alert officials across the West are scrambling to protect themselves from unilateral land grabs in their states. Idaho's congressional delegation, for example, introduced legislation within weeks of the Utah designation, aimed at preventing Clinton or anyone else from attempting a similar takeover in Idaho. The bill would prohibit presidents from invoking the Antiquities Act of 1906 to set aside federal lands as national monuments without congressional approval.

"What we see unfolding before us in Utah ought to frighten all of us," Sen. Larry Craig said on the Senate floor, as he and Sen. Dirk Kempthorne introduced the Idaho Protection Act of 1996: "Without including Utah's governor, senators, congressional delegation, the state legislature, county commissioners, or the people of Utah, President Clinton is about to set off-limits forever 1.8 million acres of Utah."

"Whether it's Bill Clinton or Bruce Babbitt, Idaho cannot accept any midnight-raid land grabs," Craig went on to say, estimating that Idaho has up to 12 million acres that would qualify for an action similar to the Utah designation. Though the Clinton Administration has not announced any designs on Idaho or other states, it is clear from circumstances surrounding the recent action that it doesn't need to. As Craig noted, "I believe that any state west of the Mississippi . . . could fall victim to this." The rest of the West, beware. □

Miss Malkin is a columnist for the Seattle Times.

OPEN DEBATE WINS

Point Taken

LEON MCKINNEY

CONSERVATIVE parents and citizens in Orange County, California, have recently scored a point against the education establishment. But first some background.

Orange County's Department of Education (OCDE) serves as an umbrella agency for 27 elementary and secondary schools and 4 community-college districts. It has three basic responsibilities: consolidating administrative functions; acting as a clearinghouse for grants from the federal and state education departments and other external entities; and oversight, which consists of auditing and approving district programs, budgets, and spending.

OCDE's superintendent, John Dean, has been known to write scolding letters to the *Orange County Register*, complaining of a lack of recognition for his efforts to fulfill this mandate, "provid[ing] the finest schools at optimal cost" and maintaining "lean budgets." But his case got tougher in 1994, when the investment schemes of Orange County's Unabanker, treasurer Bob Citron, forced the county into bankruptcy. The county's schools had borrowed $200 million to invest with Citron, losing over $40 million. For their part, Dean and the OCDE Board of Trustees not only failed to intervene, they borrowed $42 million and lost $8 million themselves.

At the same time, OCDE demonstrated an inability to live within its means. While its budget grew from $68.1 million in 1991–92 to $72.3 million in 1994–95, it approved deficits, ranging from $277,000 to $2.02 million, in every year during this period.

A review of OCDE board minutes from late 1993 through 1995 shows that relatively little board time went toward ensuring that county tax money was well spent in terms of instructing students. Instead it went to accepting external grant after external grant, for programs that seem to fit better with a concept of public schools as social-service agencies than places of instruction. For instance, the board accepted grants of $502,000 for bilingual education programs; $872,000 for prenatal, perinatal, and child-care programs; $70,000 for programs for homeless students; $353,000 for programs for troubled teenagers in "alternative" schools; $2,384,000 for "at-risk" kids; $224,000 for drug, alcohol, and tobacco education programs; and $382,000 for federal Goals 2000 (i.e., outcome-based education) programs.

As for Dean's claim of "lean budgets," one school district received

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$80,000 to provide day-care services to 16 kids. This amounts to $5,000 per kid annually, compared to statewide annual per-student spending of $4,400. In other words, these kids cost 14 per cent more to baby-sit than they would to teach. Go figure.

WHILE showing laxity in its financial oversight role, the OCDE has taken very seriously its self-appointed role as defender of the education establishment. During school-board elections in 1992 and 1994, board trustees led the way in painting conservative candidates as "extremists" with "secret agendas" to destroy public schools. For instance, board member Elizabeth Parker wrote against them in the *Los Angeles Times* in 1992, implying that they were part of a national conspiracy: "These candidates like to come across as innocent, but they're not." And again two years later: "The bottom line is they want to weaken the public school system to where it doesn't help anybody." In fact, the issues conservatives ran on were a curtailing of the county's acceptance of federal and state grants to schools—thus reducing federal and state control over schools—and a return to back-to-basics curricula.

Last March, elections for the board of OCDE were held for the first time since the county declared bankruptcy. Three of five board members were up for reelection. One incumbent and two conservative challengers, Ken Williams and Eric Woolery, won. But the education empire quickly struck back. Mid-summer, just a few weeks before Williams and Woolery were to take office, the board adopted a new policy on bringing issues up for votes at board meetings: every agenda item would have to be approved by the board president. Current president Elizabeth Parker said that this was just part of a year-long policy overhaul; one of the defeated members said it was to block votes on "frivolous" issues.

The issues Williams and Woolery ran on included using the phonics reading method in grades K–3, instituting term limits for trustees, and moving board meetings to evenings so that working parents and citizens could attend. Parker announced her opposition to all three: term limits were "a cheap way to get headlines . . . just garbage"; a resolution urging school districts to teach phonics was a misguided attempt to "issue mandates to districts"; evening meetings would be "too expensive" due to employee overtime.

When meeting time came, with over fifty supporters of Williams and Woolery in the audience (about ten times the typical audience size), Parker was forced to allow these issues to be brought up. The speakers urging phonics reading curricula, including a representative of Gov. Wilson, were pretty convincing, and this issue is still in play. But motions to place term limits before the voters and to move meetings to evenings failed by 3–2 votes.

There was still, however, the old board's rules change, placing absolute agenda control in the hands of the liberal board president. Future "frivolous" motions by the two conservative members could be quashed without debate. With that in mind, and with the assistance of the U.S. Justice Foundation, a small group of concerned citizens threatened a suit against the three remaining members who had supported the rules change, citing Section 35145.5 of the California Government Code: "It is the intent of the Legislature that members of the public be able to place matters directly related to school-district business on the agenda of school-district governing-board meetings. Every agenda for regular meetings shall provide an opportunity for members of the public to directly address the governing board on any item of interest to the public, before or during the governing board's consideration of the item, that is within the subject-matter jurisdiction of the governing board. Governing boards shall adopt reasonable regulations to insure that this intent is carried out." The citizens promised a second lawsuit if the board voted to expend taxpayer funds for their legal defense. In response, board president Parker conceded defeat and eliminated the new policy.

From one perspective this is only a small chink in the armor of the education establishment. But the combination of a conservative foot in the education-department door, and free and open debate, suggests that the chances for genuine reform are better than they have been for years. □

Mr. McKinney is a freelance writer who lives in Huntington Beach, California.

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DON'T WEEP FOR ME . . . JUST SEND CASH

Victim Quest

MICHAEL LYNCH

THE American system used to encourage assimilation of immigrants, rewarding it with a higher standard of living and increased societal acceptance. Today the system celebrates "diversity," which is to say differences, and rewards these differences with special benefits and privileges if they entail victimhood. By now the game to take advantage of this system is familiar. Professional advocates for racial, ethnic, or other groups dredge up census data and crunch out studies—often taxpayer supported—which identify disparities. These disparities can relate to income levels, job descriptions, health indicators, etc. What matters is that they be seen as the product of discrimination and/or that they require government money to correct.

In this light, let us consider two recent California studies, one of which breaks the pattern of the victimhood game, the other of which almost parodies it.

In his introduction to *The Emerging Latino Middle Class*, from the Institute for Public Policy at Pepperdine University, Gregory Rodriguez notes that "there has been virtually no attempt by government, academia, or the media to focus on the progress of the Latino middle class." In addition, Rodriguez observes that "the perverse nature of the political spoils system has encouraged non-white politicians and activists to present their communities as profoundly disadvantaged."

Considering recent Latino immigrants separately from American-born Latinos, Rodriguez found that Latinos as a whole, like older immigrant groups, are claiming their part of the American dream. Analyzing 1990 Census data, for instance, he discovered that 50 per cent of American-born Latinos and 34 per cent of foreign-born Latinos in Southern California live in households with above-median incomes. (This is compared to 38 per cent for African Americans, 58 per cent for whites, and 57 per cent for Asians.) Furthermore, over half of American-born Latinos and 30 per cent of foreign-born Latinos live in owner-occupied houses.

"Strong nuclear and extended family structures play an important role in the steady intergenerational Latino social ascent," according to Rodriguez. "Not unlike other immigrant groups—most notably the Italians—the Latino path to the middle class is marked less by rapid individual education progress and more by nuclear or extended family members who are engaged in blue- to pink-collar labor, pooling their money to improve the status of their whole family."

While the Pepperdine study assiduously ignores the hot-button issues that drive the current debate over immigration—which are mainly cultural and driven by our burgeoning welfare state—it does provide a valuable accounting of the economic demographics of Southern California's Latino population. In doing so, it should at once explode some of the cherished myths of the multicultural left and allay some of the legitimate fears of conservatives.

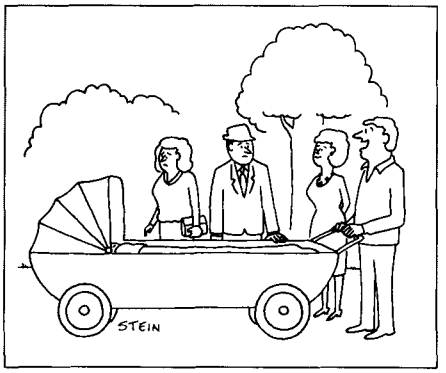
The same cannot be said of *Speaking Out*, from the San Francisco-based Asian Children, Youth, and Families Consortium, comprised of more than fifty Asian-oriented non-profit groups. Gail M. Kong, the group's executive director, admitted that this study was designed to secure more government money for programs benefiting Asians. Since Asians in general have been extremely successful in America, this is not easy. *Speaking Out* did its job well enough, however, to merit a front-page headline in the *San Francisco Examiner*: "Asians have large share of poverty."

The study's central statistic is that Asians represent 34 per cent of those living in poverty in San Francisco. But given that Asians constitute 30 per cent of the total population, this is hardly surprising. In contrast, African Americans make up 12 per cent of the population, but 31 per cent of San Franciscans in poverty.

Another of the study's findings is that "one in five San Francisco youth who drop out of high school are Asian." But Asians make up nearly 40 per cent of the city's high-school students. The fact is, Asian students are much less likely than other San Franciscan high schoolers to drop out: African Americans drop out at three times, whites and Latinos at about two times the rate of Asians.

ANOTHER of the study's alarming statistics—or rather, statistics reported alarmingly—is that Asian babies compose the largest group of low birth-weight babies (babies born at 5.5 pounds or less). But doesn't common sense suggest that this is a function of the relatively small size of Asians? (I weighed less than 5 pounds at birth. But since my mother is under 5 feet in height, no one lost much sleep over it.) Kong says that the significance of Asians' low birth-weight rate is that low birth-weight is a high risk factor for infant mortality. But again, the facts are at odds with the study's intended implications: the infant-mortality rate among Asians is 1/2 of 1 per cent, even lower than the white rate of 7/10 of 1 per cent. The African-American rate is nearly four times higher.

One might conclude from *Speaking Out* that Kong and her consortium should quit trying to sop up government dollars for Asians, using their data instead to secure resources and benefits for African Americans. But this would be too easy. How much greater and nobler a challenge to overcome Asians' "model minority" status and usher them into the growing ranks of America's victims! □



"I can't wait to teach him basketball."

Mr. Lynch is a public-policy fellow at the Pacific Research Institute.

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COLORADO PARENTS' RIGHTS

Big Deal?

SHAWN MITCHELL

COLORADO citizens will vote November 5 on a ballot initiative entitled "The Colorado Parental Rights Amendment" (PRA). This simply worded measure would establish, in the state constitution, the right of parents to "direct and control the upbringing, education, values, and discipline of their children."

Support for the PRA—which early polling put at 75 per cent—comes from conservatives and libertarians and, apparently, most parents. It is sponsored by a group called Coalition for Parental Responsibility. The chairman of the effort is Mike Norton, a former U.S. attorney appointed by Ronald Reagan. Opponents of the PRA constitute a who's who of the political, educational, and social-services establishments, including Democratic Governor Roy Romer, the Colorado Education Association, and (of course) People for the American Way. These opponents offer two different and contradictory arguments. Romer, for one, has suggested in so many words that the amendment will shield child abusers and turn control of the schools over to religious crazies. Others say that the amendment is unnecessary. It won't give parents any rights they don't already have.

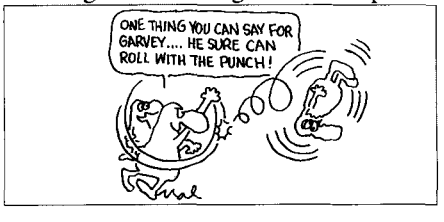
Which is it? Will the PRA do nothing or will it undo everything? Neither, actually. It is true that even supporters of the amendment have difficulty coming up with specific changes it will bring about. On the other hand, even seemingly unneeded limits on government can be important. Consider the story of the Sixteenth Amendment, introducing national income taxes. Its drafters almost included a limitation to prohibit the tax rate from ever exceeding 15 per cent. But critics argued that the cap was unnecessary and unwise—it was higher than the tax rate would ever get anyway, and indeed, it might serve as a lure for lawmakers to take the rate to the limit.

Because our forebears could not imagine the Federal Government growing as large as ours has in the intervening decades, we today can only imagine how such a 15 per cent limit might have curbed the government's growth in that period. Likewise, it is up to Colorado citizens today to imagine whether there might be any future value of the PRA.

Not all that much imagination is needed. We know, for instance, that there are many today who advocate a greater role for the "village" (a metaphor for government) in child-rearing. Colorado legislators have floated such ideas as mandatory counseling for parents-to-be. Another proposal called for universal "mentoring" by social services, including a visit to mother and child in the hospital, with the social worker evaluating how well the family is "bonding." There is already momentum to integrate social services into schools, so authorities can meet the needs of the "whole child."

Such policies might fill needs in certain individual cases. Some parents might welcome governmental help. Others might not care. But the vast majority of parents would probably choose to continue relying on themselves, extended families, friends, and churches to oversee their children's growth and development. They would choose to decide what values to instill in their children, and when, and how.

As a practical matter, it is impossible for the government to continue expanding into the child-rearing realm without colliding with the rights and responsibilities of parents. The PRA establishes constitutional ground for parents to retain family autonomy, if only by withdrawing their children from counseling, classes, or activities that conflict with parental teachings. It is an essentially defensive policy, allowing parents to say "no thank you" to the state's attempts to help raise their kids. Today, that may mean sex education, condom giveaways, mandatory community service, or psychological and counseling services. Tomorrow it might mean a family's own social worker, assigned at the birth of a first child, with an office in the neighborhood school.



The scare campaign against the PRA is nonsense, as even its more sophisticated opponents must understand. Constitutional rights in our political system are not absolute in the way critics of the Parental Rights Amendment would have us believe. For instance, free speech does not authorize yelling "Fire!" in a crowded theater. Nor does freedom of religion permit human sacrifice. When "compelling interests" such as public safety or preventing injury is involved, courts will allow laws that curtail these rights.

CURRENT Colorado law requires parents to seek medical help for seriously ill or injured children, even if the parents reject modern medicine on religious grounds. Protecting the safety of children is a compelling interest, so the law is upheld over parents' religious objections. Similarly, the PRA cannot undo child-abuse laws, even if offenders invoke it. Government has a compelling interest in prohibiting and punishing harm to children. Courts will continue to enforce such laws.

Neither will parents be able to veto school materials or micromanage curricula. Their rights to direct their own children's education do not include control over *other* children's education. Logically, the PRA allows parents only to withdraw their children from objectionable activities. Similarly, parents could not dictate offerings at public libraries, because they are free to monitor their own children's library use.

The PRA provides parents a shield against governmental encroachment. It doesn't give them active control over public institutions or immunize them from laws against abuse. Should it pass, the Colorado courts will not find otherwise. □

Mr. Mitchell is a senior fellow of the Independence Institute.

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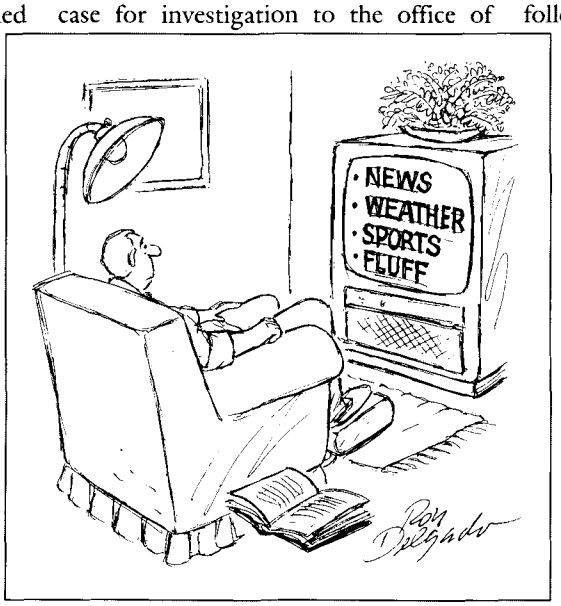
Lazy Dogs?

ON May 10, at about 8:15 A.M., Robert J. Chicoine, a Seattle attorney who lives in a waterfront home on Mercer Island, let his 11-month-old yellow Labrador, named Red, out into his fenced backyard. A few minutes later he called the dog, which climbed the stairs to the house shaking and wet with lake water. As Chicoine dried Red with a towel, he noticed blood on the cloth and found a small wound on the dog's upper side. Later a veterinary examination showed that Red had been shot twice with a pellet gun, one pellet passing through his neck and the other lodging near his heart.

Chicoine's story, according to the police report, is that he immediately suspected his neighbor, Frank Blethen, publisher of the state's largest newspaper, the *Seattle Times*. In 1993, according to Chicoine, Blethen had thrown an empty liquor bottle at Chicoine's elderly St. Bernard. In 1994, when Chicoine and his wife were out of town and their college-age daughter had some friends at their house, Blethen had put his fist through a glass panel in their front door, complaining that a car was blocking his driveway. In addition, Chicoine said he has observed Blethen numerous times shooting at geese with a pellet gun from his back patio. So when Red was wounded, Chicoine went next door and challenged Blethen: "Did you just shoot my dog?" According to Chicoine's statement, Blethen admitted that he had, adding that he only intended to scare the dog, not hit him. Chicoine told Blethen he should have telephoned if the dog was being troublesome, and Blethen asked him to leave the property.

Blethen's story of what happened is different. In a one-page handwritten statement for the police, he said that Red growled and barked at him when he tried to "shoo" the dog out of a flower garden. When Red started digging in shrubbery, failing to stop when Blethen yelled at him, Blethen used his "kid's pellet gun" to shoot at the ground behind the dog. Finally the dog swam back to its own yard. In a later telephone interview with *Eastsideweek*, Blethen firmly denied shooting the dog: "Unequivocally no. Absolutely not." Asked where the pellets that hit the dog came from, he said, "I am not responsible for those pellets. Maybe you ought to ask Chicoine." He added that other neighbors also have pellet guns. He was dismissive of the incident, referring to it humorously as "Doggate" and "a neighborhood dispute that's been blown out of proportion." As for the previous incidents cited by Chicoine, Blethen had claimed in 1993 that Chicoine's St. Bernard had attacked him. Regarding the glass-door incident, he refused comment "on advice of legal counsel."

Mercer Island's city attorney and the lead police detective on the dog-shooting case initially believed that the filing of a first-degree felony charge was merited under the state's Pasado Law (named after a donkey that was beaten to death in Bellevue). They referred the case for investigation to the office of King County prosecutor and gubernatorial candidate Norm Maleng. After an investigation which included discussions with Blethen and his attorney, Maleng's filings-division chief declined to file charges, stating that the incident did not meet the Pasado Law's intentional-inflicting-of-undue-suffering standard. Subsequently, Blethen has been charged with misdemeanor cruelty to animals by the Mercer Island City Attorney's office. A pre-trial conference is set for October 25.



We are media watchdogs, not investigative reporters. But we spent two weeks looking into this incident. Why? Our editors at *Eastsideweek* thought the important story revolved around Norm Maleng. Less than six weeks after his office declined to file charges against Blethen, Blethen's newspaper endorsed him for governor. Was political consideration brought to bear? We did pursue that angle, but found no evidence. Although we're not lawyers, the decision not to file charges seemed consistent with past rulings by Maleng's office.

BUT we were also struck by how many people, both before and after our story ran, seemed to think that if there was any political impropriety, it could only have been on the part of the politician. What about the publisher? Did he exert political pressure when he and his attorney met with Maleng's filings-division chief to discuss the case? Did he vote in the *Times*'s editorial-board endorsement meeting?

These are just a couple of the numerous questions we have proposed in our newsletter that the local media might follow up on with Blethen, Chicoine, the county prosecutor's office, and the Mercer Island police. Which leads us to the main reason we pursued the story: If we didn't, who would? The local media ignored it for almost three months, even though people were talking about it all over town.

Even when Blethen appeared in June with Hillary Clinton to present "Youth Peacemaker Awards" to young people for "their efforts to eliminate violence in their communities," the local media failed to note the ironies. Can anyone imagine such restraint if the alleged dog shooter and award presenter was a conservative notable? We can't.

—JOHN HAMER & MARIANA PARKS

Mr. Hamer and Mrs. Parks edit CounterPoint, *a media-critique newsletter of the Washington Institute for Policy Studies, and contribute to* Eastsideweek, *for which they originally covered this story.*

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basic "motivational" factors sufficiently to cast doubt on the continued existence of the universals I discuss. The economic needs of modern society probably do set a lower limit on the status of women; no modern society could give women the low status they receive in some non-modern societies. But modernization probably also sets an upper limit; no modern society is likely to give women the status given to the maternal roles in some other matrilineal societies.

Scandinavian nations, which have long had government agencies devoted to equalizing women's position, are often cited by social scientists as demonstrating modernization's ability to override patriarchy. In fact, however, Norway has 454 municipal councils; 443 are chaired by men. On the Supreme Court, city courts, appellate courts, and in Parliament, there are between five and nine times as many men as there are women. In Sweden, according to government documents, men dominate "senior positions in employer and employee organizations as well as in political and other associations" and only 5 of 82 directors of government agencies, 9 of 83 chairpersons of agency boards, and 9 per cent of judges are women.

One may, of course, hope that all this changes, but one cannot invoke any evidence implying that it will.

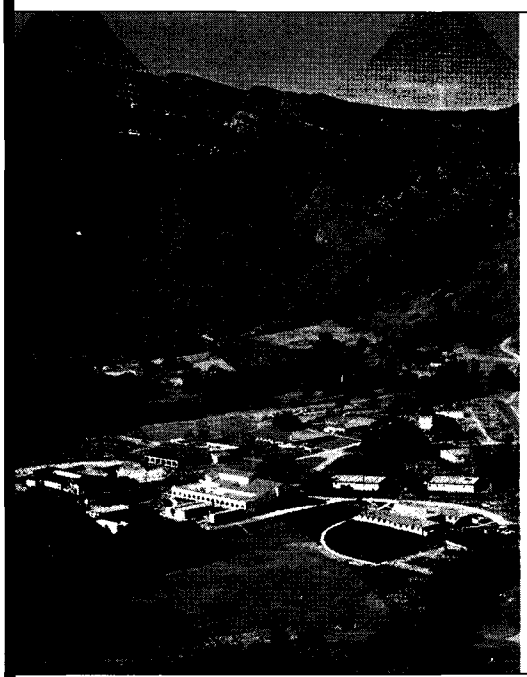
Of course, there are those who simply try to assert away the evidence. Lewontin *et al.* write, "Cross cultural universals appear to lie more in the eye of the beholder than in the social reality that is being observed." In fact, with reference to the universalities mentioned above, they do not. If these universals were merely "in the eye of the beholder," the authors would merely have to specify a society in which there was a hierarchy in which males did not predominate and the case would be closed.

The answer to the question of why an institution is universal clearly must be parsimonious. It will not do to ascribe causation of a universal institution to capitalism or Christianity or modernization, because many hundreds of societies lacked these, but not the universal institutions. If the causal explanation is to be at all persuasive, it must invoke some factor present in every society from the most primitive to the most modern. (Invoking the male's physical strength advantage does meet the requirement of parsimony, but does not counter the evidence of the central importance of neuro-endocrinological psycho-physiological factors.)

When sociologists are forced to acknowledge the universals, they nearly always invoke "socialization" as explanation. But this explanation faces two serious problems. First, it does not explain anything, but merely forces us to ask another question: *Why* does socialization of men and women always work in the same direction? Second, the explanation implicitly assumes that the social environment of expectations and norms acts as an *independent* variable capable of acting as counterpoise to the physiological constituents that make us male and female.

In individual cases, of course, anything can happen.

There is a small Catholic college in the mountains of Southern California unlike anything in your experience: Thomas Aquinas College



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Even when a causation is nearly entirely hereditary, there are many exceptions (as tall women demonstrate). Priests choose to be celibate, but this does not cast doubt on the physiological basis of the "sex drive." To be sure, there is also feedback from the environmental to the physiological, so that association of physical strength with males results in more males lifting weights. However, in principle, a society could find itself with women who were physically stronger than men if women lifted weights throughout their lives and men remained sedentary.

In principle, a society could find itself with women who were physically stronger than men if women lifted weights throughout their lives and men remained sedentary

But, in real life, this can't happen because the social environment is a *dependent* variable whose limits are set by our physiological construction. In real life we all observe a male's dominance tendency that is rooted in physiological differences between males and females and, because values and attitudes are not of primary causal importance here, we develop expectations concordant with the male–female behavioral differences.

Most of the discussion of sex differences has emphasized the neuro-endocrinological differentiation of males and females and the cognitive and behavioral differentiation this engenders. This is because there is an enormous amount of evidence demonstrating the role of hormones in fetally differentiating the male and female central nervous systems, CNS response to the potentiating properties of certain hormones, and the thoughts and actions of males and females.

There is not room here for detailed discussion of the neuro-endocrinological mechanism underlying dominance behavior. But a useful analogy is iron and magnet. Iron does not have a "drive" or a "need" to find a magnet, but when there is a magnet in the area, iron, as a result of the very way it is built, tends to react in a certain way. Likewise, the physiological natures of males and females predispose them to have different hierarchies of response to various environmental cues. There is no response that only one sex has; the difference between men and women is the relative strengths of different responses. Males react more readily to hierarchical competitiveness than do females; females react more readily to the needs of an infant-in-distress. Norms and socialization do not cause this difference, but reflect it and make concrete a specific society's specific methods for manifesting the response. (Cleaning a rifle and preparing Spaghetti-Os are not instinctive abilities).

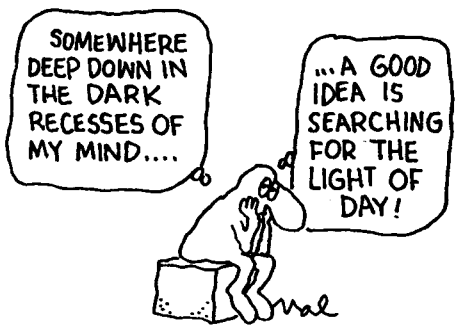
The iron–magnet analogy makes clear the role of social environment. Were there to be a society without hierarchy, status, values, or interdependence of the sexes, there would be no environmental cue to elicit the differentiated, physiologically rooted responses we discuss. But it is difficult to imagine such a society and, indeed, there has never been such a society.

Even if we had no neuro-endocrinological evidence at all, the anthropological evidence alone would be sufficient to force us to posit a mechanism of sexual psycho-physiological differentiation and to predict its discovery. We do, however, possess the neuro-endocrinological evidence and the anthropological evidence permits us to specify the institutional effects—the limits of societal variation that the neuro-endocrinological engenders.

For thousands of years, everyone, save perhaps some social scientists and others ideologically opposed to the idea, have known perfectly well that men and women differ in the physiological factors that underlie masculine and feminine thought and behavior. They may not have known the words to describe the linkage of physiology with thought and behavior, but they knew the linkage was there. (I recently read a comment of a woman in Pennsylvania: "They keep telling us that men and women are the way they are because of what they've been taught, but you can go a hundred miles in any direction and not find a single person who really believes that.") And even the most feminist parent, once she has children, can't help but notice that it is nearly impossible to get small boys to play with dolls not named "Killer Joe, the Marauding Exterminator," or at least with trucks—*big* trucks.

NONE of this is to deny tremendous variation on the level of roles. Even in our own society, in just a century the role of secretary changed from virtually solely male to virtually solely female. With the exception of roles associated with child nurturance, political leadership, warfare, security, and crime, virtually every specific role is male in some societies and female in others. No one doubts that the women who exhibit the dominance behavior usually exhibited by men encounter discrimination. But the question remains: why is dominance behavior usually exhibited by *men?*

The implication of all this depends on context. Clearly the correctness or incorrectness of the theory I present is important to an understanding of human behavior and society. But to the individual man or woman, on the other hand, the universals are largely irrelevant. The woman who wishes to become President has a sufficient number of real-life equivalents to know that there is not a constraint rendering impossible a female head of state. But there is no more reason for such a woman to deny that the motivation to rule is more often associated with male physiology than there is for the six-foot woman to pretend that women are as tall as men. □



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RUNNING OUT THE CLOCK

Riding High

The final weeks of the campaign may seem dull, but keep an eye on the coalition Bill Clinton is busily forging.

KATE O'BEIRNE

THE year's most wooed voter waited outside the Louisville Slugger Museum on a chilly Kentucky evening three weeks before the election. In front of this monument to baseball, she sported a blue sweatshirt that declared incongruously "Soccer Mom For Clinton." Still, her patience and clothing investment paid off. A delighted Bill Clinton greeted her with his biggest grin of the day as he worked the crowd following his speech.

Clinton supporters with that kind of dedication were thin on the ground. The President with a need to be loved was encountering crowds that mainly wanted to see a celebrity. On his 17-hour campaign trip to Tennessee, Ohio, and Kentucky—to woo, respectively, partisan Democrats, blue-collar workers, and moderate suburbanites (especially those elusive Soccer Moms)—most voters were friendly enough. But they had apparently turned out for the meetings without any particular enthusiasm for Mr. Clinton's politics, or indeed any politics. How they went home is quite another matter—and an alarming one for the GOP.

The press was, well, too inert to really notice. On the media plane accompanying Air Force One, White House press secretary Mike McCurry cheerfully complained that he was unable "to raise a pulse" from the seventy or so regular passengers. "They just don't think it's a race," he explained, checking to make sure my heart wasn't pounding under the illusion that a real political fight might be under way. The seasoned Clinton-watchers balanced their checkbooks and talked baseball between stops.

Was there, indeed, a presidential race to be interested in? This campaign swing yielded little evidence of one. No local GOP forces bothered to show the flag—an onlooker at the Knoxville airport whose cap was emblazoned "Busch" came near to expressing the only Republican sentiment of the long day. And though Clinton–Gore lawn signs were scattered along the motorcade route, not a single bumper sticker was evident for either ticket. Spirited opposition erupted only once, when people lining the sidewalk in Dayton booed the buses marked "Media"—clearly a bipartisan sentiment.

Joe Lockhart, the campaign's press secretary, explained to the few reporters willing to listen that the day's trip was devoted to shoring up the President's lead. And Clinton is clearly energized by the crowds he wades into—shaking hands, hugging the people closest to him. When it comes to speaking, he calibrates his message to his audience, barely glancing at notes during lengthy, detailed speeches. Judged technically, it is the performance of a professional politician at the top of his form. But does it "connect" with his audiences?

At the first stop, in Knoxville, a friendly audience of partisan Democrats waited more than two hours to hear Al Gore and Bill Clinton. The candidates were there ostensibly to announce an initiative to hook up every classroom in the country to the Internet (not to mention a $100-million subsidy to Silicon Valley)—what Lockhart calls the "wonk stuff." A large banner on the stage proclaimed: "Building America's Bridge to the Twenty-First Century." Gore, oddly the more animated of the two, raised his arms and waved to the crowd in his awkward schoolboy way, while Clinton merely delivered a small, curt salute.

It was Gore's job that day to slam the Luddites in the Republican Party (a bold tactic from a foe of the internal-combustion engine). He duly warned against a "digital divide" between the haves and the have-nots if every classroom in the country is not on the Internet. He prophesied that nearby Oak Ridge Laboratory would be closed by the Democrats' congressional "opponents" who had attempted to cut the science and technology budget by a third. And he reminded the audience that he first started talking about the Information Superhighway twenty years

Mrs. O'Beirne is NR's *Washington editor.*

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ago. (It seems longer.) In those days he had "dreamed" of a girl in Carthage, Tennessee, who could plug into the Library of Congress from her home. (Poor Tipper—married to the only man for whom a girl is merely a peripheral to a computer.)

Clinton wisely stuck to computer software, but he communicated real enthusiasm for the wonders of technology. "There is more computer power in a Ford Taurus you drive to the supermarket," he declared, "than there was in Apollo 11 when Neil Armstrong took it all the way to the Moon."

Gore warned about a 'digital divide' between the haves and the have-nots if every classroom is not on the Internet

This was no innocent fascination with applied science—the President's point was that government deserves the credit for such advances: "Of the 12 Americans who won the Nobel Prize last year, all 12 had received government support for their research," he said. His enthusiasm for technological advance was really an optimistic vision of what the future holds as long as government leads the way. "I know that you all believe in this," he told his Democratic listeners, advising them to fight the current antipathy to government by having at hand "three or four examples that people can identify with" of how their tax dollars are being profitably used.

He was talking to the right audience. A year ago, the party faithful in Knoxville had little to celebrate. Today they were excited by a rosy future—not that of technology but that of the Democratic Party under Bill Clinton. They could see public-sector jobs dancing before their eyes.

It was a different audience that afternoon in Dayton, an enthusiastic blue-collar crowd with young children in tow who gathered in a small square downtown not to cheer a candidate but to see their President. When Air Force One touches down and the President's twenty-car motorcade winds through the streets, a serious kind of carnival comes to town. Sharpshooters prowl the roofs, Secret Service agents in black jumpsuits flank the stage, and "Hail to the Chief" heralds the main attraction. All the king's horses and all the king's men provide an excitement missing from the politics of the race.

Before this bi-partisan audience, Clinton was restrained, self-consciously "presidential." He joined the local politicians on stage with his small salute for the cheering crowd. But he seemed uncomfortable in the lead role. Does he sense that he lacks something, some mysterious presidential gene, some measure of dignity that the office demands? Bill Clinton provokes such questions at regular intervals. At one moment he is all smooth self-confidence; the next moment a nervous little boy peeps out, wondering if the imposture has been detected. This could just explain the gender gap: half the women's vote has been seduced, the other half persuaded they are his mother.

That day's only mention of foreign policy is also a local reference. Clinton thanked the audience for their role in the Dayton Accords. Special mention went to a woman whose restaurant fed the Bosnian negotiators.

Having solved the Bosnian question, the President ran through the litany of good news that doubles as his record. Over the past four years 10.5 million new jobs created . . . household income up $1,600 . . . the highest home-ownership rate in 15 years . . . 1.9 million fewer people on welfare . . . the biggest drop in child poverty in twenty years . . . the lowest poverty rate among seniors ever recorded . . . the minimum wage up . . . crime rates down. As he soared to a climax, the President became the very incarnation of Progress. "We have doubled life expectancy for people living with HIV . . . we have discovered two genes that cause breast cancer." Really? Bill on his own? Or Bill, Al, and Hillary?

After this list of accomplishments, Clinton declared, "We are better off than we were four years ago, but we've got a long way to go to build that bridge to the twenty-first century." The bridge metaphor is stolen from Bob Dole, and the agenda it represents stolen in part from Newt Gingrich. But these voters, applauding and impressed, have not been persuaded by Dole and Kemp that they could do better.

During a bus trip from the airport to a rally site, one reporter tells a colleague that he hadn't been on a campaign trip in a while. "You're not missing anything," he is assured. "It's still that f—— bridge." The reporters are merely irritated by the repetition; its significance is either ignored or not grasped. This is a serious lapse—because if Clinton wins on November 5, the bridge will be transformed into a mandate for enlarging the scope of government.

LOCKHART admits that the bridge metaphor suggested itself to Clinton after Dole's San Diego speech. Symptomatic of his butterfly-minded campaign, Dole dropped his "bridge to the past," and with it his defense of the virtuous communities of yesteryear, as soon as questions were raised about it. But he had inadvertently provided Clinton with an effective symbol for his second term. Audiences are drawn to the imagery of a bridge that leads to an exciting new century of untold wonders.

But they also feel an undercurrent of foreboding, which Clinton encourages. He speaks with urgency about the need to be as prepared as he is for the new millennium. Listeners are meant to conclude that without Clinton to guide them, they might be left behind in this tired old century. Of course, if his audiences were to sit idly in lawn chairs along Knoxville's Interstate 64, the new century would still come upon them. But the President inspires them to want to join him in preparing for the crossing.

And what they must do is help him expand the reach of government. Clinton punctuates each mention of a new federal initiative with his raised fist and the

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plea, "Will you help me build that bridge to the twenty-first century?" Audiences invariably applaud.

The agenda that would usher in the new millennium in a Clinton second term includes tax breaks for education, child care, home-ownership, and health care; an expansion of the Family Leave Act; expansion of health insurance for the unemployed and "respite benefits" for families of Alzheimer's patients; federal support for school remodeling; tax credits for college tuition; a corps of tutors to teach reading; a ban on certain bullets; more federal cops on the beat; and Internet access in every classroom.

All these programs are meant to appeal to the middle class, and each is modest in itself. The public refused to swallow a whole beaker of federalized health care, but recent audiences appear eager to take the small sips Clinton now offers from the federal trough.

As yet, Republicans have not found an effective response to these tactics. Apparently fearful of the post-partum fury of millions of soccer moms, they supported the mandate that insurance companies cover 48-hour hospital stays for mothers and babies after normal deliveries. (When this soccer mom's fingers had to be pried off the bedpost for me to be sent home three days after the birth of my youngest son, it didn't occur to me that my pique should be of concern to the Federal Government.)

A ragtime band played for the expectant suburban crowd that waited for the President in downtown Louisville. Mike McCurry explained that Clinton was hoping to help freshman Congressman Mike Ward, who is in a tough re-election fight. And the campaign provided him with a pleasant local backdrop for doing so. A 120-foot Louisville Slugger bat stood behind the President as he sat through the local politicians' exploitation of all the obvious metaphors. "We have 26 'Clinton cops' on our streets because the President went to bat for us," declared Louisville's mayor. The President was being invited to hit his message out of the ballpark.

But in front of the suburbanites he is coolly winning over, Clinton risked no partisan appeal. He implausibly noted the remarkable "influence" that Ward had wielded in his one term, but noticeably refrained from a pitch for a Democratic House. The Democratic challenger to Senator Mitch McConnell was praised as a "fine man," but the balance of power in the Senate went unmen-

In this program, there are no right or wrong answers. Only right and left.

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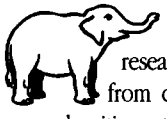

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tioned. It was above-the-battle, soothingly presidential, not about politics at all.

And Clinton didn't make the typical liberal case for the welfare state, but rather explained how the Federal Government can step in to reduce the tensions and inconveniences of everyday middle-class life. This notion of a family-friendly Federal Government went down well with this audience.

A relaxed Mike McCurry stood in the evening chill watching the cheering crowd. He expressed surprise that he had enjoyed such a quiet day just three weeks before the election. Bob Dole, campaigning with Colin Powell in Ohio, had simply not been heard from. "We had expected an attack on our foreign-policy record, or on ethics, something like 'I'd have people of Colin Powell's caliber in my Cabinet.' But nothing," he marveled.

The secret of this campaign is that under the guise of non-partisan presidential appearances, politics *is* going on. As he coasts to re-election, Bill Clinton is fashioning a new Democratic coalition. The partisan liberals who welcomed him to Knoxville are energized by the prospect of victory—while Dayton's blue-collar voters and Louisville's suburbanites are seduced into increasing their dependence on a government that responds to their "needs" one at a time.

The GOP comforts itself that over 60 per cent of the public believes "the Federal Government is too big and does too much." But how much does that matter when the President is putting in 17-hour days to make that belief a pious irrelevancy—as irrelevant as his admission that "the era of Big Government is over"?

Too many Republicans have convinced themselves that a Clinton victory will be merely an interregnum between idea-fuelled GOP victories in 1994 and 1998. But if Bill Clinton builds a new coalition that includes suburban voters, the GOP will discover that ideas are not everything. Coalitions too have consequences. □

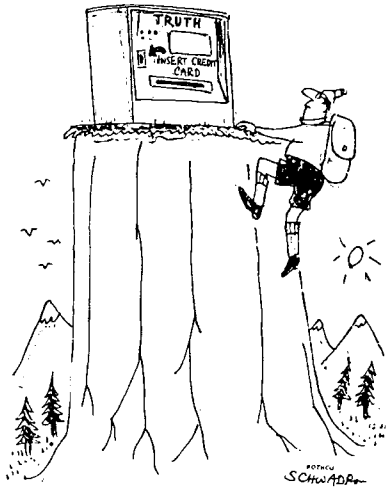
California Dreaming

Republicans can win the Golden State, if they remember the Reagan Coalition.

PATRICK REDDY

NOVEMBER of 1996 marks the thirtieth anniversary of the most important local election in the twentieth century. Most elections for statewide office seem to confirm Tip O'Neill's old adage that "All politics is local." But thirty years ago, Ronald Reagan was elected governor of California in a campaign that would realign the political landscape of the nation for a full quarter-century. Out of the 1966 Reagan campaign came a suburban style and a new set of issues which came to dominate national politics. Less widely noticed was Reagan's impact on California as an electoral entity: with their old Southern base turning against them, Democratic presidential nominees were now shut out of the nation's most populous state; ever since, they have faced a quadrennial uphill battle in the Electoral College.

In 1966, Democratic Gov. Pat Brown was seeking a third term. He had previously beaten two nationally famous



Republicans: Sen. William Knowland in 1958 and Richard Nixon in 1962. Brown would rank as one of the most accomplished governors anywhere. As California's first modern governor, he built the Central Valley water project, which essentially ended the state's water battles. He also built more schools, dams, and highways than all his successors combined. His massive investments in the University of California made it the finest public university in the world, and its tuition was so low that a janitor's child could afford to go to college there. California lived off Brown's investments in infrastructure for a generation. But his remarkable political run was ended abruptly by Reagan, who sent him into retirement with the only loss of his career.

To understand Reaganism's impact on California, we shall break the state down by geography and social group. California is divided into four geographical areas: 1) the Bay Area, which includes San Francisco, Oakland, and San Jose, plus their suburbs; 2) Los Angeles County; 3) the rest of Southern California, which includes the suburban counties of Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Ventura, and San Diego; and 4) Rural California, which is every place outside the Los Angeles, San Diego, and San Francisco metropolitan areas.

For years, California's cities have voted Democratic, with the suburbs (particularly in the Southland) voting mainly Republican. But whereas in most industrial states the rural vote was Republican, farmers in California were mostly migrants from the South and from the Border states (see John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*) and, hence, had a Democratic heritage.

In terms of social groups, California may be our most diverse state, with significant concentrations of blacks, Mexican-Americans, gays, Jews (usually part of the "White Liberal" category), union members, farmers, ideological conservatives, and literally millions of suburbanites. Over the last two generations, almost 20 million Americans have moved to California (roughly the population of Ohio and Michigan combined), making it a terrific cross-section of the nation. Indeed, since 1932, Republicans have taken 48 per cent and Democrats 47 per cent of the cumulative national vote, and of California's vote as well.

Unlike New York or Illinois, each of which has one central Democratic base,

Mr. Reddy is a California pollster and a consultant to CNN.

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there was never any particular geographical strategy for either party in California. Coalitions here need to be broad. From 1932 to 1964, the Democrats had no trouble assembling one that included minorities, liberals, and workers in the two big urban areas, plus farmers and their employees in the Central Valley. In those 32 years, Democratic presidential candidates carried the state six of nine times.

White working- and lower-middle-class voters began to think of themselves as taxpayers and not simply as recipients of government largesse

In 1962, Pat Brown handily defeated Nixon, precipitating the former Vice President's "last press conference," where he said "you won't have Nixon to kick around any more." Brown carried every region except the Southern California suburbs. More importantly, he ran ahead of his overall total among two crucial working-class groups: urban blue-collar voters in L.A. County, and rural Central Valley residents. But 1962 was the last time that the New Deal coalition was fully intact here. In 1964, Lyndon Johnson beat Goldwater in California by 59 to 41 per cent, but the writing was on the wall for liberalism: Johnson ran *behind* his statewide figure in the urban working-class precincts (the first time that had happened here since the 1920s), and working-class whites voted 2 to 1 against an Open Housing referendum.

By 1966, the New Deal coalition was on its deathbed. The Watts riot of 1965 plus rising general crime rates had severely eroded the very tenuous coalition of white workers and blacks. The campus turmoil of the mid-Sixties—the Berkeley Free Speech Movement plus the assorted anti-Vietnam protests—had produced an angry set of middle-aged parents who wondered what the world was coming to and where their tax dollars were going. Eventually, white working- and lower-middle-class voters began to think of themselves as taxpayers and not simply as recipients of government largesse.

Ronald Reagan had entered the picture in 1964 with a tough speech for Barry Goldwater, and the Democrats thought they had another easily beatable "extremist" on their hands. (In fact, Brown's operatives helped Reagan get nominated by publicizing a scandal involving Reagan's GOP opponent, and they cheered when Reagan won the primary.) But Reagan trumped the edge Pat Brown had in experience and accomplishments by staunchly proclaiming that minorities had no right to riot because they were unhappy with social conditions, that students should quit protesting and study, that the government didn't owe anyone a living, and that society should seek to protect lives and property, not the rights of criminals. Reagan buried Pat Brown by almost a million votes, with nearly all his margin coming in Southern California and the rural areas.

The result of 1966 was a realignment in California politics which was to last for a generation. Democratic presidential candidates failed to carry the state for the next 22 years; they have not won a clear majority since 1964 and could win open contests for the governorship only in national landslide years like 1974. Although it is true that Democrats have consistently held the state legislature since the 1970s, that is primarily a consequence of gerrymandering, not ideology.

THE table on page 43 shows that Democratic nominees have lost the most support in the last generation among exactly the groups among whom Reagan had his biggest gains in 1966: Anglos, Southern California suburbanites, conservatives, urban white workers, and Central Valley residents. Rarely has the voting pattern of an entire political era been so well encapsulated in one election.

In just two years, the new alignment of 1966 produced profound national consequences: Reagan's base in Southern California delivered the votes that won California for Nixon in 1968, and this provided Nixon's margin of victory in the Electoral College. (Had Hubert Humphrey won California, the election would have been decided by the House of Representatives, which was then overwhelmingly Democratic.)

The Reagan shadow loomed over national politics in other ways: The "tax

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revolt" got an early start here in 1978 and helped carry Reagan to his national victory in 1980. The Reagan Coalition peaked with Reagan's 1984 49-state incineration of Mondale, in which Reagan essentially split the immigrant vote, getting two-thirds of the Asians and almost 40 per cent of the Hispanics.

Even when Ronald Reagan wasn't on the ballot, his influence was felt. Jimmy Carter's failure to carry California helped deny him a mandate

The Motor Voter Myth

NOVEMBER 5 will be the first national election held under the rules put in place by The National Voter Registration Act (Motor Voter). The NVRA was one of the first laws passed by the Democratic Congress of 1993, with the support of the Clinton Administration. The authors sold it as a way of streamlining the registration process and increasing voter participation.

The debates in Congress led the public to believe that Motor Voter would simply allow people to register to vote at government agencies while conducting other business, such as renewing a driver's license or applying for unemployment or welfare. What could be more benign? After all, the proponents argued, these agencies all require some form of ID from people applying to them. Unfortunately, Motor Voter went well beyond its original concept.

This law has taken all common-sense security measures out of the election process. NVRA mandates that every state allow registration by mail and that "no formal authentication of ID may be required." Furthermore, the act requires every state actively to promote the registration of voters by "independent groups." For years, California's election code has allowed independent groups to conduct voter registration, and has waived ID requirements. As a result, there has been a tremendous amount of fraud in registration and voting here. The National Voter Registration Act will create similar problems, but on a national scale.

A closer look at the independent voter-registration groups reveals that most are motivated by a single issue or by party affiliation. One group registered almost 3,000 new Hispanic voters in California's 39th Assembly District before this year's March primary. There was just one problem: most of the registrations were fraudulent. A random sample of 10 per cent of the new voters revealed phony addresses and large numbers of registrants who admitted they were not U.S. citizens. The registration group had told them that "you don't need to be a citizen to vote any more." The office of California Secretary of State Bill Jones is investigating this registration drive. But, stories like this no longer surprise Californians. In 1994 Mario Aburto Martínez, the assassin of Mexican presidential candidate Luis Donaldo Colosio, was found to have been registered to vote twice by groups like this one.

The Aburto story caught the attention of members of California's congressional delegation, and they asked the Justice Department to investigate the problem of non-citizens voting. Incredibly, the Justice Department replied that "there is no constitutional requirement nor federal law that requires citizenship to vote in federal elections." This ambiguity in federal law has since been corrected by an amendment in the immigration-reform bill that was recently signed into law. Although the law now clearly states that only United States citizens can vote in federal elections, if election officials are forbidden to require ID—or are discouraged from checking it—this law is meaningless.

At a June 1994 hearing held by a California State Senate Committee, a Hispanic member of the Los Angeles Police Department testified about her experience as a volunteer with the California-based Southwest Voter Registration Education Project. While working in a Hispanic neighborhood, she observed that she was not registering as many voters as other volunteers were. Talking to others in her group, she discovered that her fellow volunteers were not asking if the potential voters were citizens. When she reported this to her supervisor, she was reprimanded and told that she was not to ask that question; she was instructed to ask only whether the person wished to register to vote.

With funding from companies such as Pacific Bell, GTE, Anheuser Busch, and Taco Bell—plus the $1 million raised by President Clinton—Southwest has targeted nine states for registration drives and absentee-ballot campaigns this year. In Michigan, Illinois, Ohio, and New Jersey, Southwest promises to play the "swing vote role at the presidential level and in many congressional races." In California, it plans to "propel key Latino nominees for State Assembly seats to victory, setting the stage for the first Latino Assembly Speaker in California history."

But non-citizens voting is not the only type of fraud that Motor Voter will exacerbate. The Fair Elections Group has documented many cases of the registration of voters whose addresses prove to be vacant lots, and the registration of children, cats, dogs, and deceased people. (California data indicate that dogs tend to be Democrats and cats to be Republicans.) In just the past month, we have received calls from candidates in every part of the country alarmed about sudden shifts in the registration numbers, but at this point, for this election, there is little that can be done.

THE goal of The National Voter Registration Act of 1993 is full registration of every eligible person, and the Fair Elections Group agrees with the concept. Unfortunately, Motor Voter contains no provision for effectively stopping illegal registration and voting. We must wonder if the true wishes of the American people will be reflected in the results of the November election. And while we would like to give the benefit of the doubt to the authors of this law, we must question the motives of those who have made voting the only government-sponsored activity that does not require ID.

—KAREN SARANITA

Miss Saranita is the executive director of The Fair Elections Group, a non-profit research group based in Southern California (2390 Crenshaw Blvd., #101, Torrance, California 90501; 310-539-5004).

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in 1976, and George Bush's narrow defeat of Michael Dukakis here in 1988 (with Bush wearing the Reagan mantle) mathematically clinched his victory.

The early 1990s witnessed the first serious cracks in the Reagan Coalition. Bush's breaking of his "No New Taxes" pledge demoralized conservatives. More importantly, the California economy took its first serious hit since the 1930s. California had always led the nation out of recessions in the postwar era because defense spending continually went up during the Cold War, and the population boom kept real-estate prices healthy. But the mainstay of Southern California's economy—defense and aerospace—went through a serious downsizing in 1990–95. Ironically, these defense cuts were caused by the success of Reagan's foreign policy in winning the Cold War. And after Americans actually started *leaving* California (much of the Population growth in the Nineties has been from immigrants), real-estate prices also crashed. Bill Clinton became the first Democrat to win California since 1964, with Ross Perot taking more than 2 million votes.

So, does the Reagan Coalition have any life left in it? With the South gone for Democrats, Bill Clinton cannot get re-elected without the Golden State's 54 electoral votes. The California economy has almost completely recovered under Clinton. But the presence on the ticket of Los Angeles native Jack Kemp should help the GOP. Perhaps conservatives can recover by once again using social issues. Pete Wilson used the immigration issue to come from behind and win a second term as governor. Recent polls have shown that the anti-illegal-immigration Proposition 187 is more popular than ever with white voters. This should help Dole and Kemp somewhat, as will their promised tax cuts.

But the issue that could tip the state to the GOP may be Proposition 209, a proposal to ban affirmative action in state-

California Presidential Voting, 1932 to 1992
(Democratic Share of the Total Vote)

	Averages, 1932–64	Averages, 1968–92	% Change
Regional			
San Francisco Bay Area	55%	50%	– 5
Los Angeles County	53%	47%	– 6
Rest of Southern California	47%	34%	–13
Rural California	57%	42%	–15
Social Groups			
Anglos/Whites	51%	38%	–13
Blacks	78%	88%	+10
Hispanics	81%	72%	– 9
White Liberals	54%	53%	– 1
Conservatives	41%	29%	–12
Central Valley	58%	42%	–16
Southern California Whites	45%	30%	–15
South California White Workers	59%	45%	–14
Statewide	54%	44%	–10

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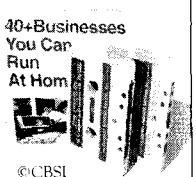

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government operations. Early polls show that over two-thirds of whites and Asians favor it, thus giving the initiative at least 52 per cent of the total vote. If Dole can attach his candidacy to Proposition 209, the Reagan Coalition will have one last hurrah and the Gipper will have won the game for Dole–Kemp. It looks like a long shot today. But if the GOP wins the White House, that is how it will have been done; there's no other way. □

Honorable Mention

Baby-boomers don't like Dole because he makes them ashamed of themselves.

BARBARA LERNER

WHEN it comes to their view of Bill Clinton, baby-boomer pundits are diverse. Many see him as a mirror of their generation. Some like what they see; others don't. But when it comes to Bob Dole, boomer pundits speak with one voice. Whether conservative or liberal, they agreed from the start that Dole was a weak candidate. This was not the case with older conservative pundits. Bill Safire, Norman Podhoretz, Jeane Kirkpatrick, and Georgie Anne Geyer have found much to admire in Dole; Bob Novak and John McLaughlin haven't. But there is no comparable split among younger conservative pundits. Bill Kristol, Arianna Huffington, David Frum, Kate O'Beirne, and Paul Gigot all see Dole in pretty much the same way, and there is no fundamental difference between their view and that of their liberal peers, such as Juan Williams, Bob Beckel, and Michael Lewis.

There are exceptions, of course. Mary Matalin was more than dutiful on CNBC. Bob Woodward and Richard Ben Cramer avoided the condescension that creeps into most boomers' prose even when they praise Dole. And John Podhoretz penned a "We Were Wrong" piece. Still the boomer consensus holds: Dole is too old and inarticulate to be a good President. A decent workhorse, maybe, but hopelessly limited. Skillful, in a technical, legislative way, but a man who couldn't communicate a vision even if he had one.

With this picture of Dole in mind, the younger pundits made their predictions with confidence. There was an outside chance Dole would step down as Senate Majority Leader, but no chance he would leave the Senate. Across-the-board tax cuts? From an old-fashioned budget-balancer like Dole? Forget it. A supply-side running-mate who endorsed Steve Forbes? Not a chance. In *Newsweek*, Howard Fineman reported that campaign manager Scott Reed raised that possibility with Bill Kristol two days before Dole chose Kemp. "Hopeless," Kristol said.

The fact that all these predictions were wrong produced one change in the boomers' view, a new adjective: "secretive." The eloquence of Dole's "just a man" Senate resignation speech produced none. It, too, surprised boomer pundits, evoked admiration, even—but for speechwriter Mark Helprin, not the man who chose him. The generational split was even wider after Dole's acceptance speech. Podhoretz père saw "luminous phrases, leaping out and lighting up the rhetorical landscape," and Ted Koppel, a greybeard with no known proclivity for praising Republicans, called it "a great speech." Most boomers, however, saw it as a bust. To Chris Matthews, it was "the worst ever"; to Morton Kondracke, "a laundry list." Michel McQueen labeled Dole "a preachy grandfather."

But it was Dole's offer to serve as "a bridge to the past," to an America that was better, that really set the boomer chorus baying. A *New York Times* editorial called it his "biggest rhetorical mistake," and a *Times* story by William Honan described how "artfully" Clinton "snatched his opponent's metaphor and turned it against him," offering himself as a bridge to the future, using "the B-word 22 times." Bill Kristol agreed. It was "as though a Civil War veteran were running in 1916, or a World War I veteran . . . in 1968." Maureen Dowd spelled out the underlying logic. Mocking Dole's claim to be "the most optimistic man in America," she explained: "You can say that the country has been sliding downhill for half a century or you can call yourself an optimist. But you can't do both."

Why not? Haven't boomers heard of the renaissance? Of reinventing the future by rediscovering the past? In fact, some of them go on "renaissance weekends" and Miss Dowd can be side-splitting about *those*, but when it comes to Dole, even the least liberal boomers tend to march in lockstep. The question is, why? I think it's largely a matter of generational character, and the kind of political atmosphere a dominant trait can create. It is, by now, a cliché to say that the boomer generation is the most narcissistic in American history, but understanding what this means is harder. To understand it, you have to grasp the difference between having a big ego and being a narcissist. Then you have to factor in the size of the boomer generation. A group that large didn't have to struggle to meet a standard; it *was* the standard.

'To those who say it was never so, that America has not been better, I say, You're wrong, and I know, because I was there. And I remember'

OF COURSE, boomers have no monopoly on oversized egos. But narcissism is something more. It has to do with the presence of solipsism, the absence of perspective, and a consequent inability to respect limits or recognize and correct the mistakes everyone makes when young. People with big egos see themselves at the center of their own worlds. Narcissists do too, but the narcissist recognizes no other world. An egotist can say, "I am a

Miss Lerner is a freelance writer who lives in Princeton.

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great person," but only a class of narcissists can say, "We are the world," and mean it. Because if nothing outside your own world is real to you, there is no limit to the natural tendency to exaggerate your own accomplishments, no barrier to keep vanity from metastasizing into grandiosity. And it is precisely that narcissism that Dole attacked, head-on, in his speech, the boomers' bedrock conviction that whatever their faults, they are the best, and their America, flawed as it is, is far superior to any past America:

> I was born in . . . a place where no one grows up without an intimate knowledge of distance. And the first thing you learn on the prairie is the relative size of a man compared to the lay of the land. And under the immense sky where I was born and raised, a man is very small, and if he thinks otherwise, he's wrong. . . .
>
> Age has its advantages. Let me be the bridge to an America that only the unknowing call myth. Let me be the bridge to a time of tranquillity, faith, and confidence in action. And to those who say it was never so, that America has not been better, I say, You're wrong, and I know, because I was there. . . . And I remember.

Boomers hated it. The first passage is a paean to virtues they don't possess or value; the second strikes many as a lie. A better America? In this century? Before we changed it? Nonsense. Frank Rich summed it up for the Left after the 25th reunion of his 1971 Harvard class. There was no doubt in his mind that *his* America was better. Why? Well, his class was 93 per cent white, but the 1996 class is only 63 per cent white. He concludes: "No matter how fiercely the Vietnam decade is refought this election year, one need only look around a transformed American institution like Harvard to see the tough and important battles our obstinate generation decisively won." Translation: There are more blacks at Harvard, ergo, blacks are better off. And what if the vast majority of black Americans are incomparably worse off than they were in the 1940s and 1950s on every moral and quality-of-life measure? Well, those people aren't part of Mr. Rich's world, and they don't enter into his calculations. Ditto the people of South Vietnam, the huddled masses who fled in rickety boats after we abandoned them, choosing the probability of death at sea to life in "liberated" Vietnam.

Boomer pundits on the Right have other illusions. For them, the great strides forward came in the Nineties, and the Gingrich revolution of 1994 was the greatest of all. Many boomers embraced it with all the critical restraint their liberal peers showed in embracing Sixties revolutions. A hostile sitting President? "Irrelevant," they said. A foot-dragging Senate? Likewise. Speaker Newt and his cohort would rule the nation from the House. A shrewd and effective leader at first, Gingrich began to let his boomer pride crush his judgment, and instead of helping him control it, boomer pundits egged him on. More! Faster! Revolution now!

When he responded to their urgings and his poll numbers plummeted, only a handful of boomer pundits re-evaluated their own role in turning victory into defeat. Many turned instead to newer Wunderkinder: Colin Powell, Bill Bennett, Steve Forbes. No matter that none had held elective office, or that the only prior American Presidents who hadn't were Grant and Eisenhower, the men who led us to victory in two of our three greatest wars. That didn't strike boomers as a big obstacle. They disagreed about which boomer should be President—Clinton, Gingrich, or a Gingrich stand-in. But they knew it should be one of them. And together, they formed a kind of boomer chorus, chanting, "Anyone but Dole." And together, they sang the Sixties song: "Don't trust

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anyone over 30." Only now that the first boomer is 50, it's "over 60."

It's not war that threatens them now; it's aging and intimations of mortality, realities that evoke rage and denial in narcissistic characters. Witness our new religion of health, fitness, and unisex plastic surgery, and our new devil—tobacco. Dole is 73. Never mind whether he's liberal or conservative—the man is old! Unable to "relate" or "communicate." "Irrelevant." "Take your gold watch and go, Pops. You're the past. We're the future."

In fact, boomers are the present. Generation X is the future, and if enough X-ers recognize and reject the parental self-indulgence that wreaked

The X Files

THE difference between Mars and Venus has obsessed candidates, pundits, and the media this election year. They have all overlooked a more reliable electoral factor than sex: age. A twenty-something female college graduate paying for entitlements she will never receive has more in common politically with men her own age than with her grandmother who relies upon those entitlements. Young voters have been overlooked because only 28 per cent of them are likely to vote, compared with 68 per cent of senior citizens. But 43 million Americans were born between 1965 and 1976—a potential vote large enough to be worth courting.

The youngest voters in America have become both more conservative and less loyal to the two major parties than their elders. Ideologically, 37 per cent of 18-to-24-year-olds and 44 per cent of 25-to-29-year-olds consider themselves conservative in their general social and economic outlook. But about 40 per cent identify themselves as "Independents," leaving Republicans and Democrats with about 25 per cent each. And a whopping 45 per cent of voters under 30 were undecided one month before the election. The presidential lead among young voters shifted three times in August alone.

To attract these young voters politically, we must first understand them culturally. This generation has witnessed no galvanizing event like a major war or the civil-rights movement; its members most often cite the *Challenger* explosion as the most influential event in their lifetime. Most significantly, 40 per cent of them had lived in a single-parent household by the time they were 16. They are the original latch-key kids, with working parents and younger siblings to care for after school. These experiences forced them to develop a brand of self-reliance which they want to see in everyone.

This upbringing has also left them craving familial stability. They define the "American Dream" in less material terms than earlier generations, with "happiness" or "a spouse and family" often cited as the main keys to future success. In a *Swing* magazine poll published in April 1996, 30 per cent of X-ers said that "a balance between work and home" was the single best definition of personal success. A further 26 per cent cited "a happy home life," and 12 per cent, "spiritual fulfillment." Contrary to the conventional wisdom, young people are just as likely as the general population to consider themselves pro-life (35 per cent and 36 per cent respectively). The "out-of-sight, out-of-mind" mentality that has led to abortion on demand clashes with the sonograms of developing fetuses they studied in their junior-high-school science classes.

A CANDIDATE who wishes to engage younger voters need not discuss his underwear on TV, pierce his navel, or lay flowers on Kurt Cobain's grave. Like other voters, young people have bread-and-butter concerns.

The Economy: Ross Perot got X-ers thinking about the deficit. They are saving more than their parents did at this age. The candidate or party that is willing to risk some political capital by confronting Social Security would appeal to these voters.

Education: Young voters routinely cite education as their most important concern. Otherwise, the news for conservatives isn't entirely good. A recent survey by The Polling Company showed that Gen X-ers are less likely than the general population to choose teaching the basics or giving parents more control as the best way to improve education (47 per cent versus 63 per cent). And a large 35 per cent chose increased government funding. Conservatives can take some comfort from the fact that Gen X-ers do not advocate raising taxes as a way to improve schools. They believe the money is already there, that much of it is wasted, and that it should be re-committed to learning at the local and state level. What's more, a recent Gallup survey reports that teenagers (the coming "Generation Y"?) want "values taught within their curriculum" and "more homework."

The Environment: Gen X-ers put the environment back on the national political agenda. Modern environmentalism has found its way into school curricula; baby-boomer mothers claim that their primary source of information on the environment is their kids.

This sentiment does not, however, translate neatly into liberal politics. The Gen X version of environmentalism stresses personal responsibility (to recycle, for instance) rather than political action. Indeed, Gen X-ers are against overregulation, in keeping with their general skepticism about government; 69 per cent think local and state governments would do a better job of protecting the environment than the Federal Government. What young voters are looking for is evidence of concern about the environment. Ignoring it can be hazardous to a candidate's political health, but simply talking about it would go a long way toward persuading younger voters that one takes their beliefs seriously.

Those Americans born between 1965 and 1976 will be voting long after Bill Clinton leaves the Oval Office. A long-term investment in them could produce steady dividends. After all, the generation called "X" will be making its mark for some time.

—KELLYANNE FITZPATRICK

Miss Fitzpatrick, a Generation X-er, is president of The Polling Company and a political analyst for CNN.

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havoc in so many of their own divorce-haunted childhoods, they may yet restore some of the fundamentals that made the America of the 1940s and 1950s a country where children of all races mostly lived in stable families, and even the poorest in safe neighborhoods. Should X-ers look to their grandparents to help them restore that America? Yes and no. As one of my favorite boomers says when I carry on like this, "Okay, but remember who raised us." Okay, I do, and it's true we were dumb to take goodness for granted, mistaking the virtues born of the discipline our parents and ancestral traditions imposed on us for the natural inclinations of a non-existent noble savage. Dumb and wrong to overindulge our kids, starving them of standards, gorging them on self-esteem.

Still, whatever our private sins, our public virtues were real enough to produce some genuinely good results. At home, we rejected segregation and opened the doors of opportunity to blacks. We trusted people of color to behave like the moral superiors so many then were, instead of the welfare and affirmative-action wards so many became under the tutelage of our children. We did pretty well abroad too, not just in World War II, but after. Though the elite of the day liked him no better than today's elites like Dole, we elected another political drone from the Plains, Harry Truman, the man who called for the "Marshall" Plan, let another man's name be affixed to it, and made it work—a far cry from the boomer President who called Srebrnica and Northern Iraq "safe areas," ignored the results, and claimed success.

Because keeping your word matters in both foreign and domestic affairs, the coming generation will live to rue those errors—unless we correct them. But if Dole loses, there's no chance that we will. There is still hope. But it is not the hope (which some still harbor) that Clinton's character flaws will cause him to self-destruct. Camus, witnessing the smugness and corruption of postwar France, knew better—"If I raped my grandmother in a public park, my countrymen would claim it was a moral act." America in the Nineties is more forgiving still. We don't think Clinton's act is moral. We see his character flaws; we know his promises have a short shelf life. We don't think it matters.

To win, Dole must make an errant generation see that it does. □

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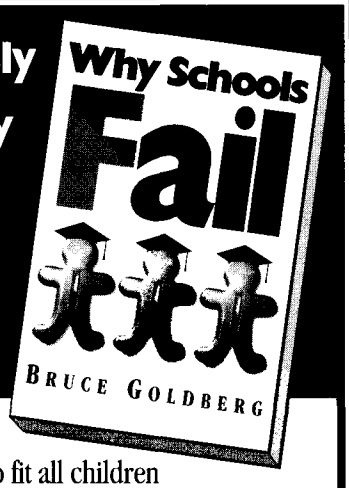

Bruce Goldberg argues that schools today, both public and private, attempt to fit all children into a pseudo-scientific one-size-fits-all system: "The denial of individuality is at the core of the failure of the schools." From Mann, to Piaget, to Hirsch, he says, the attempt to create a scientific theory of education has foundered on the fact of children's individual differences.

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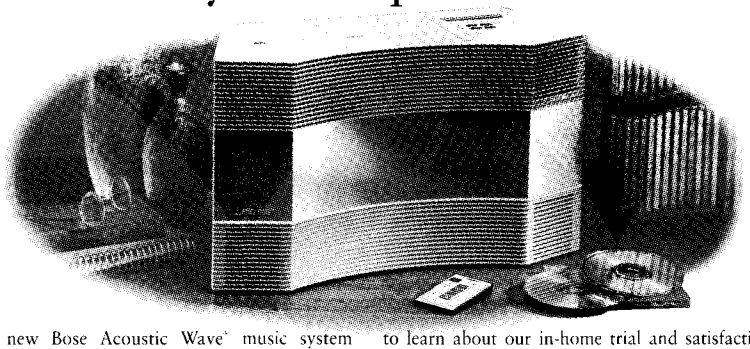

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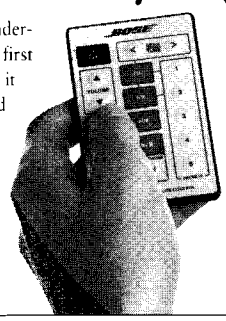

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Controversy

Thomas McArdle's "Instant Democrats" [July 1] is based on the inaccurate and unfounded assertion that the Immigration and Naturalization Service's Citizenship USA initiative was launched for political purposes.

The INS announced Citizenship USA in August 1995 in response to an unprecedented increase in citizenship applications from an annual average of 300,000 to more than 1 million in FY 1995, with at least that many expected this year. Waiting time had grown to nearly two years in several districts and would have increased considerably if we had continued business as usual. This was unacceptable to us, the applicants, and elected officials from both political parties.

The primary objective of Citizenship USA was to become current with citizenship processing nationwide, while maintaining the standards required by law. The INS focused its naturalization staffing and other resource increases on five cities, comprising 75 per cent of the pending caseload, that were suffering the most severe application backlogs and where waiting times had grown far beyond the long-established standard of six months. We concentrated resources not where speculation about voting patterns might lead, as Mr. McArdle asserts, but where backlog problems were most acute. To ignore a 300-plus per cent workload surge would have been irresponsible.

Citizenship USA has received wide bipartisan support, as shown by Congress's approval in 1995 and 1996 of additional spending authority for naturalization functions. These funds came from applicant fees, not taxpayer dollars. The Citizenship USA initiative also has been praised by public officials from both political parties, including New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani (R.), Reps. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen and Lincoln Diaz-Balart (both R.—Fla.), Chicago Mayor Richard Daley (D.), and San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown (D.).

Citizenship USA is showing dramatic results in bringing application-processing time back to reasonable periods. For example, in the Los Angeles District, the time from filing to the INS interview is approximately 7 months for most new cases, down from more than 15 months this time last year. In New York, the wait is down from about 18 months to 5 months—back to the historical levels established and accepted by previous Administrations.

Mr. McArdle again is simply wrong when he says that "hundreds of staff from the Internal Revenue Service and other federal agencies are being shifted over to help the INS process applications." The fact is that no such workers were available, but the INS was able to fill some new positions from a pool of qualified former federal workers, a standard practice for all federal agencies.

Mr. McArdle erroneously states that the required citizenship exam has been "dumbed down to a multiple-choice quiz." We have not eliminated or altered any legal requirements or administrative steps for citizenship. To the contrary, we are improving the overall citizenship examination process, including creating better testing procedures, eliminating inefficiencies, and identifying cases that require in-depth review. The citizenship examination includes successful completion of written and oral English and civics tests (taken from sample questions developed in the Eighties), an FBI name and fingerprint check, verification of all eligibility requirements, demonstration of "good moral character," review of an applicant's criminal record, if any, and a personal interview by an INS examiner. These elements remain unchanged under Citizenship USA.

Mr. McArdle incorrectly implies that giving the written civics and English test to a number of applicants at the same time somehow diminishes the process. Most applicants are tested during their interview with an INS officer. In some locations, we are piloting better methods for INS officers to administer the examination using accepted practices for the bulk of standardized testing in the U.S. (e.g., SATs, GREs, and the many achievement tests administered by local school systems). Our denial rate has risen to 17 per cent in FY96, consistent with or greater than traditional rates.

In conjunction with the courts and numerous community partners, the INS endeavors to make every citizenship swearing-in ceremony a dignified and meaningful event. Every ceremony that I have attended—and I have attended many—has been a profoundly moving experience that reminds each new citizen and all of us privileged to be birthright citizens how truly fortunate we are to live in this great country. I encourage everyone to attend a citizenship ceremony. I regret that Mr. McArdle failed to appreciate the emotion and meaning of the ceremony he witnessed. I have no doubt that the new citizens sworn in that day in New York did.

Doris Meissner
Commissioner, INS
Washington, D.C.

Not surprisingly, Commissioner Meissner makes no attempt to refute the main points of my article: the White House's own documents show that the Clinton Administration has been pushing to make as many new citizens as possible before the November election. The INS may indeed have launched Citizenship USA on August 31, 1995. However, soon after the program was designated a "Reinvention Lab" under Vice President Gore's "Reinventing Government" initiative on September 5, 1995 (at the specific request of Mrs. Meissner), Citizenship USA was hijacked by the Administration.

Unfortunately, integrity was not a concern of the White House, according to the preliminary results of an investigation into Citizenship USA by a subcommittee of the House of Representatives' Government Reform and Oversight Committee. Those politicians, Republicans and Democrats with immigrant constituents, who supported the program will have second thoughts as the final results of this investigation come to light. It will be difficult to defend a policy that allowed applicants to purchase a passing score in the English and civics tests from for-profit testing entities (and at that, the test questions are often as simple as "What are the colors in the American flag?"), and that resulted in granting U.S. citizenship to hundreds —perhaps thousands—of criminals, including armed robbers, murderers, rapists, and child molesters. Thousands of applicants' fingerprint cards were never even sent to the FBI for checks, and many of those whose prints were *sent were naturalized before their results were returned.*

Instead of investing in new technology to make the naturalization process more efficient, more secure, and less labor-intensive, the INS chose to bring in hundreds of untrained temporary workers and to divert personnel from other INS functions—including investigations, inspections, border patrol, even asylum—and from other federal agencies. There is little distinction between shifting federal workers from one agency to another and "fill[ing] some new positions from a pool of qualified former federal workers," as Mrs. Meissner describes it. The whole purpose of Vice President Gore's "Reinventing Government" program is questionable if bureaucrats downsized out of other agencies soon reappear at the INS.

As to the mass swearing-in circus I attended in the INS's new center in Garden City, N.Y., I suggest that the next time Mrs. Meissner visits one of these ceremonies she step out of the spotlight and roam among the people her agency is awarding the highest privilege the United States has to offer, U.S. citizenship. I doubt she'll have to look far to find the disrespect for America I witnessed.

—THOMAS MCARDLE

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THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON

Mr. ANONYMOUS BUDDHIST, The Buddhist Temple, Hacienda Heights, California
Dear Mr. ANONYMOUS BUDDHIST:

President Clinton and I wish to thank you for your generous contribution of $1500.00 to the Clinton/Gore '96 Re-Election Campaign.

As you know, Mr. BUDDHIST, President Clinton and I are fighting to protect America's values. We can't do it without your support, ANONYMOUS, and the support of the BUDDHIST family.

Once again, thank you, ANONYMOUS BUDDHIST, for your generous contribution of MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE PERSONAL to our effort!

Sincerely,
Al Gore
Vice President of the United States

Ms. Karsheed Fatwaddy, K&F Convenience Store, Rte. 17A, Rawlings, WV
Dear Ms. Fatwaddy:

On behalf of President Clinton, myself, and the Democratic National Committee, please accept my profound thanks for your recent contribution to the 1996 DNC Victory Fund.

Your $457,987.32 will go to our nationwide effort to protect America's values from the Dole/Gingrich Congress. With your help, we can once again put both houses of Congress safely in Democratic hands, to protect America's health care, education, and evironment, and to keep Dole/Gingrich from enacting their risky tax scheme that will blow a $500-billion hole in the deficit.

Once again, many thanks!

Sincerely,
Al Gore
Vice President of the United States

Mr. Yu Lee Shing, The Yu Lee Shing Tower, Central Hong Kong
Dear Mr. Shing:

President Bill Clinton and I would like to thank you for your recent contribution to the Democratic National Committee.

As you know, both President Clinton and I are committed to a free and open trade policy with our Pacific neighbors. We have worked tirelessly over the past four years to promote economic cooperation between our country and the numerous countries you and your family call home.

Your recent contribution of $1,905,987.03 will enable us to continue our efforts at economic renewal both here and abroad.

On a personal note, both Tipper and I would very much enjoy hosting you and Mrs. Yu in Washington early next year, after the inaugural. Perhaps at that time, you and I can review some of the specific issues that you enumerated on the "memo" line on your recent check.

Sincerely,
Al Gore
Vice President of the United States

Mr. Robbie Yu, The Yu Lee Shing Tower, Central Hong Kong
Dear Mr. Yu:

President Bill Clinton and I would like to thank you for your recent contribution to the Democratic National Committee.

As you know, both President Clinton and I are committed to a free and open trade policy with our Pacific neighbors. We have worked tirelessly over the past four years to promote economic cooperation between our country and the numerous countries you and your family call home.

Your recent contribution of $2,345,900.00 will enable us to continue our efforts at economic renewal both here and abroad.

On a personal note, Bill and Hillary would be honored to host you and up to four (4) of your relatives and/or associates at a private dinner before the inaugural ceremonies, and to an informal "Get To Know Your President Breakfast" two days later. You and your guests are welcome to stay either in Blair House or at the home of Mr. Don Fowler.

Again, many thanks.

Sincerely,
Al Gore
Vice President of the United States

Dr. Rusty, Base Camp Station, The Mouth of the Orinoco, Brazil
Dear Dr. Rusty,

Thank you for your recent contribution of $25 to the Clinton/Gore Re-Election Campaign.

Your $25 will enable us to continue to protect America's values.

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—W. H. von Dreele

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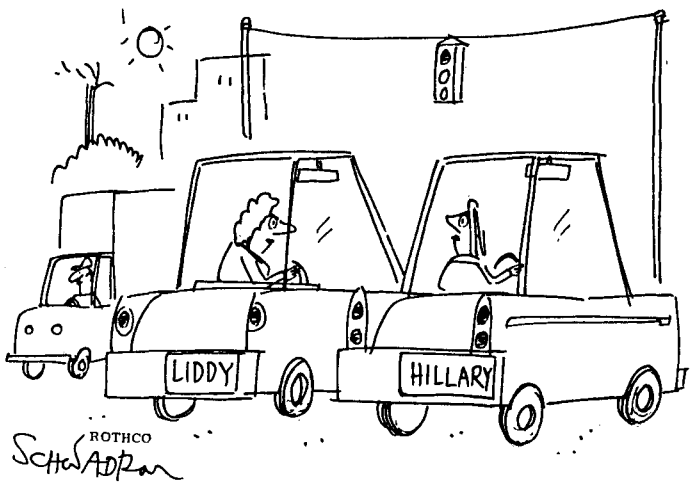

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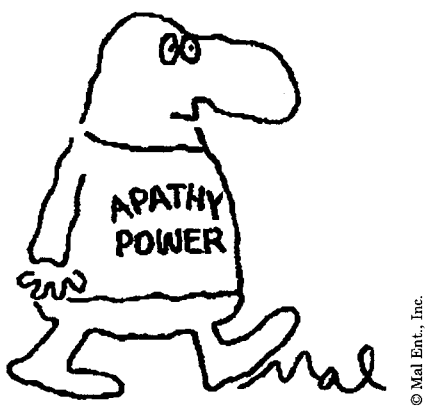

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BOOKS, ARTS & MANNERS

The Violent Bear It Away

CHRISTIE DAVIES

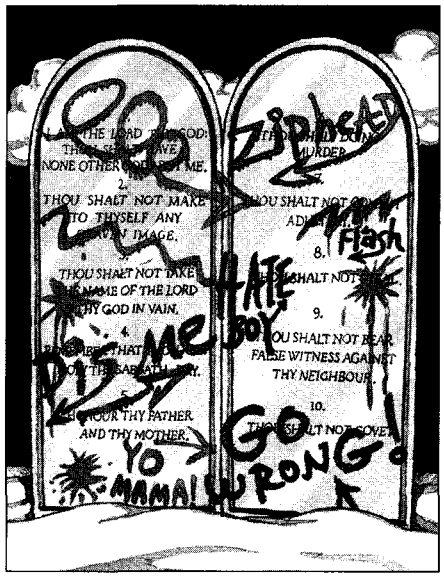
IT is an appropriate time for Americans to be writing books about violence. As William Bennett, John DiIulio, and John Walters make clear, the United States is now the most violent of the civilized nations, with ten million violent crimes every year; this represents a five-fold increase since the 1950s. Between 1990 and 1994 there were nearly 120,000 murders, twice the death toll of the Vietnam War. Although there has been a modest fall in the incidence of violent crime in recent years, teenage violence, including murder, has continued to increase dramatically. As soon as the proportion of teenagers in America rises again, in the echo of a past baby boom, so too will the incidence of criminal violence; indeed the future will be even worse, for with every decade teenage criminals become meaner, nastier, and more violent than their predecessors.

The reason for this surge of violence has nothing to do with the alleged causes cited by the liberal Left, such as poverty, social injustice, or racism, but is the result of an increasing "moral poverty," an apt phrase coined by Bennett and his colleagues. By this they mean the failure—particularly in homes with a single parent or where one or both of the parents are themselves deviants or even criminals—to provide children appropriate moral training. The trends are clear: rising illegitimacy results in increased violence.

During the last thirty to forty years economic prosperity has grown and there has been a five-fold rise in social spending, but illegitimacy, crimes of violence, and property crimes have all vastly increased. Bennett et al. rightly identify moral factors as being at the core of this social regression. My own earlier research on other countries not only confirms their finding but strongly supports their concluding hypothesis that the "religious dimension of moral poverty . . . is the most important dimension of all."

Mr. Davies is a professor of sociology at the University of Reading.

Where I am forced to disagree with Bennett (a former director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy) and his co-authors is in the equal emphasis given to crime and drugs in the very title of their book, which speaks of "*America's War against Crime and Drugs.*" The link between these two evils is not as simple as it seems. In particular the authors unreasonably attack *NR* for calling for drug legalization.



Frederick H. Carlson

Nowhere do they properly confront the point made by Nathaniel Pallone and James Hennessy that 26 per cent of property crimes and 27 per cent of robberies are carried out to get money to buy drugs. Should the price of drugs rise thanks to successful law enforcement, this will presumably lead to even more crime. I do not dispute the inverse of this, as shown by Bennett et al.: that a fall in the black-market price of cocaine, heroin, or marijuana leads to a corresponding rise in the number of drug-related emergency-room cases. Were tobacco to be banned tomorrow there would be a marked improvement in the nation's health, much as there was during Prohibition (of alcohol) in the 1920s, but there would also be a huge upsurge in organized crime and hence violence as bootleg cigarettes and chewing tobacco poured in from the Balkans, Egypt, and Zimbabwe. True, heroin and cocaine can rot the moral fiber not just of individuals but also of communities, but then as Bennett and his co-authors themselves show, this is equally true of alcohol consumption. The answer is neither prohibition nor a wide-open market but a high degree of control that stops short of an unwinnable "war against drugs" and uses morality and derision, taxation and licensed prescribing as its key forms of pressure, not criminal law.

Body Count: Moral Poverty . . . and How to Win America's War against Crime and Drugs, by William J. Bennett, John J. DiIulio Jr., and John P. Walters (Simon & Schuster, 271 pp., $24)

Fixing Broken Windows: Restoring Order and Reducing Crime in Our Communities, by George L. Kelling and Catherine M. Coles (Free Press, 336 pp., $25)

Tinder-Box Criminal Aggression: Neuropsychology, Demography, Phenomenology, by Nathaniel J. Pallone and James J. Hennessy (Transaction, 335 pp., $39.95)

Demonic Males: Apes and the Origins of Human Violence, by Richard Wrangham and Dale Peterson (Houghton Mifflin, 350 pp., $24.95)

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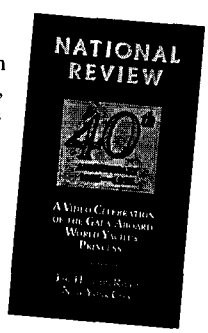

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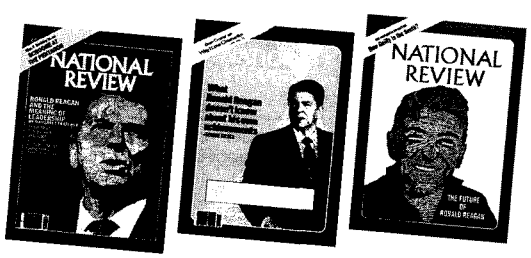

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George Kelling and Catherine Coles's plan for reducing crime in America by restoring order in the community, an order symbolized by the speedy fixing of broken windows, is timely and persuasive. On the basis of case histories of successful crime-reduction policies in New York City (especially in the subways) and Seattle, and of valiant but flawed attempts in Buffalo and San Francisco, the authors are able to show that the key to reducing crime is the restoration of order. During the last thirty to forty years, streets and other public spaces, and bus, train, and subway stations, have become places of disorder thronged by homeless vagrants, aggressive panhandlers, the heedless mentally afflicted, and the drunken and drug-stupefied who sprawl on the sidewalks. They inspire not merely distaste but real fear among tourists, commuters, and shoppers. Worse still, they are the sea in which the real villains—pickpockets, the muggers, and the armed drug dealers—swim.

Why, by Samoan standards, is America so unviolent?

What Mr. Kelling and Miss Coles have shown is that when the police ignore the "petty" problems of disorder and concentrate on major crime, they fail; the perpetrators of serious crimes continue to elude them. By contrast, if the police impose order by arresting fare-beaters and aggressive beggars, moving on loungers and idlers, forcefully directing the inebriated and the mad to appropriate refuges, and stamping out disorderly conduct, then serious crime falls. Such has been the experience of several cities.

What is alarming is the extent to which policies of this kind have been challenged in the courts and in some cases stymied. Those enemies of the people, the advocates for the homeless, have argued that the solicitations of beggars are protected free speech and that even to sprawl in rags on the sidewalk is a form of expression, a way of communicating the horrors of destitution to others. Such laws, they say, penalize people less for their behavior than for their status as homeless persons and deprive them of the equal protection of the law to which they are entitled. In some cases, as Mr. Kelling and Miss Coles demonstrate, naïve judges have upheld such claims because they see only one case at a time and consider it purely in terms of that individual's rights, rather than looking to the problems caused by thousands of people being obstructive in a public place and harassing passersby. The authors patiently advise local policymakers and police officers on how to defeat these pettifogging misinterpretations of the Constitution, but can its Framers really have intended to protect vagrants and sturdy beggars, drunks and lunatics in this way?

Mr. Kelling and Miss Coles blame such legal perversity on the dominance of "libertarian" thought to the exclusion of community interests. Here they are wrong, for the real villain is not liberty but equality. Most middle-class and respectable working-class Americans have in recent years experienced a progressive reduction in their freedom of speech (and in other freedoms) due to the rise of political correctness. There has been no campaigning on their behalf by morally indignant liberal-Left lawyers, who, predictably enough, are concerned with the rights only of those at the very bottom of the social order. Their actions do not truly assist the welfare of these unfortunates (and in some cases malefactors); they merely ensure that the task of restoring order in public places is made more difficult.

Pallone and Hennessy's *Tinder-Box Criminal Aggression* identifies a major cause of criminal violence as being the impulsiveness and risk-seeking of the more violent members of society. Not only are such people prone to violence but they select situations in which violence is likely to break out. The authors' "tinder-box" thesis, though important in its own right, fails to explain why there is more violent behavior in America today than in the 1950s, unless we return to Bennett et al.'s thesis of increasing moral poverty and declining self-control. Pallone and Hennessy's work is very thorough and well-referenced, but why do they have to refer to so many of those whom they cite as "distinguished" or "leading," or as having produced "landmark" research? Is it so that the flattered ones will buy their book?

Richard Wrangham and Dale Peterson's *Demonic Males* is a very well-written account of violence among men and among their nearest relatives, male chimpanzees, who also commit murder and rape and indulge in organized warfare. No other animals kill members of their own species in this way. The authors' work provides a good critique of the inane cultural determinism of much American social science but cannot explain why the incidence of violence changes over time and varies between societies. Why, for instance, should Samoans (of Margaret Mead fame) commit proportionately far more rapes and murders than Americans? Why, by Samoan standards, is America so unviolent?

More to the point, though, is that Americans are far more violent than they were in the recent past. From this we may conclude that social policy in America was superior at that time, and particularly in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, when the incidence of violent crime fell markedly in cities as diverse as Philadelphia, Boston, and Buffalo, despite the considerable problems encountered by first-generation immigrants. It is a past to which America can and should return. □

Decline and Fall

WILLIAM C. PORTH

PERHAPS it is time to get practical and stop lamenting the travesty Democrats on the Senate Judiciary Committee have made of the judicial-confirmation process. True, some notable hearings on recent Supreme Court nominees have plumbed the depths of shamelessness. But look at the results. Once a jurist of conservative leanings has been thoroughly savaged by the hounds of liberalism, he seems

Mr. Porth is a lawyer in Charleston, West Virginia.

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proof against any subsequent attempts by those eminently pragmatic beasts to lick his hand and turn his head. What doesn't kill us makes us stronger, or, as Housman put it so neatly, "Mithridates, he died old."

Slouching towards Gomorrah: Modern Liberalism and American Decline, by Robert H. Bork (ReganBooks/HarperCollins, 382 pp., $25)

Regardless of whether a candidate for our highest court is ultimately accepted or rejected, it seems that this encounter with the Left provides an unforgettable baptism by fire. It tends to strengthen both character and intellect. On the Court it has given us Clarence Thomas, who (in the face of continued scurrilous detraction) is producing the soundest, most impeccably grounded constitutional jurisprudence we have seen in decades and is destined to be regarded by any impartial verdict of history as one of the greatest Justices of this century. In the public arena it has given us Robert Bork, who, after successive careers as a professor, government lawyer, and judge, has emerged as one of our most trenchant and insightful social critics. By contrast, a more genteel confirmation experience gave us . . . Anthony Kennedy.

In his last book, *The Tempting of America*, Judge Bork included a memorable account of his own confirmation process and its political hijacking—along with a politico-legal history of the Supreme Court, and some profound reflections on constitutional interpretation. His new book, *Slouching towards Gomorrah*, is even more ambitious. Not only does Bork combine history, political theory, social analysis, and fragments of personal reminiscence in one comprehensive volume, but the scope of his assessments includes virtually all departments of modern society except science, commerce, and sport—e.g., art, morals, education, religion, and law, to name a few—and the manifold ills that beset them.

Although the instances of our precipitous decline are multifarious, Bork argues that they can be explained in large part by a common cause: the prevalence of modern liberalism and its animating principles of radical individualism and radical egalitarianism. These forces have weakened and in some cases effectively destroyed the customs, beliefs, understandings, and behaviors that were once united to form the foundation of a civilized society. Radical individualism has produced a corruption of autonomy that elevates self-gratification above any sense of decorum, common interest, or objective value. Radical egalitarianism has produced a parody of equal rights that replaces open opportunities and fair procedures with an enforced equality of result (and which, as a practical matter, necessitates constant governmental interference to ensure the suppression of natural inequalities).

Of course, the two forces often conflict. Radical individualism tends to produce an unfettered society in which everyone does as he pleases. Radical egalitarianism tends to produce a repressive society of strict controls and perpetual regulation. One, unchecked, would lead to anarchy, the other to despotism. Yet modern liberalism has embraced both of these debasing tendencies. Thus, we have arrived at a society in which a husband and wife need to get a dozen permits and provide an environmental impact statement before they can fill in a backyard puddle, but are allowed neither notice nor a voice in whether their 14-year-old daughter has an abortion.

Judge Bork has already begun to be pilloried by the media for his exposé of cultural decline

Bork's analysis of our modern mutations of individualism and egalitarianism is sharp and persuasive. The bulk of his book consists of capsulized overviews of discrete social problems and realms of cultural decline, along with a consideration of the causal or aggravating role played in each by these liberal propensities. The parade of horribles is nicely mustered, if perhaps a bit too reliant on quotations from this or that conservative columnist. Still, one can't expect a summary to astound with depth or wealth of detail, and Bork does a creditable job of gathering samples of

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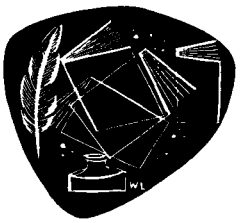
a wide array of social pathologies and presenting them with great clarity and more than a little wit. At times he manages even more, as in his chapter on abortion and euthanasia, "Killing for Convenience." In remarkably few pages, a former believer in the propriety of abortion presents as eloquent and logically compelling a case for its immorality and injustice as I have ever read.

Judge Bork has already begun to be pilloried by the media for his exposé of cultural decline. One gets a sense that, far from dreading that fate, he goes out of his way now and again to court it. His "case for censorship," for example, will set impeccably capped teeth gnashing from New York to Los Angeles. Whether or not one agrees with Bork's position, however, he deserves credit for raising a subject that deserves debate but is commonly treated, by both Left and Right, as taboo.



At times, though, Bork strikes me as unduly provocative. He allows himself a few too many asperities about the Declaration's passage "We hold these truths . . ." as the ultimate source of modern radicalized notions of individual freedom and equality. These ideals truly have been perverted, as Bork acknowledges, but they are not, as he also suggests, somehow responsible, through faulty formulation, for that perversion; and they are far too important to us as a nation to be given such dismissive characterizations as "resounding generalities" and "rhetorical flourishes." In addition, Judge Bork can fairly be faulted for paying insufficient attention to his text. The truth that "all men are *created* equal" neither says nor suggests that they are entitled to equal outcomes; it simply justifies their being treated as of equal moral worth and dignity.

Although he is an acute diagnostician of our cultural ills, Bork prescribes few remedies. To a large extent, he recognizes that there are no simple nostrums or government policies that can cure us. Indeed, when he considers in his final chapter the thoroughness of our decline and the dearth of promising responses, he can offer little beyond the exhortation to hope and persevere.

At least one of his more concrete policy proposals—that Congress be empowered to overrule by majority vote decisions of federal and state courts—goes down hard. Giving the Federal Government such a power over state courts (even if limited to state-court interpretations of the U.S. Constitution) would be yet another diminution of the states' power. (Congress, one has to suppose, would simply be able to review *more* of the states' decisions than the Supreme Court, with its smaller resources, can manage.) Draining still more power from the states is not a trend that should be encouraged or continued. And giving Congress the trump hand over the federal judiciary is not likely to produce greater fidelity to the Constitution, but only to replace the infidelities dear to the elites with infidelities of a more popular stripe. Admittedly, it would bolster democracy; and it might relieve some of the pressures on our culture—although given its current state, that's problematic. But what we desperately need to make our constitutional system work as it was designed to work is not a legislative veto power over court decisions but a restrained and responsible judiciary.

Disagreements over details aside, however, one can't fail to recognize *Slouching towards Gomorrah* as a splendid work of both social theory and sociological assessment. We have had some brilliant books in recent years on particular cultural ills; Bork has given us a useful work of synthesis, enlightened by his own theoretical insights. Like his near namesake, Burke, Judge Bork has enriched our understanding of how societies can thrive and how they can fail. His achievement is all the more remarkable in that he has formed his reflections on America's cultural revolution not, as it were, in the calm of a London library, but from a cell in the Conciergerie. □

Breast Wishes

WALTER OLSON

IN recent years leading medical researchers have come out with big studies finding—contrary to what we were told in one of the great scare campaigns of modern times—no link between silicone-gel breast implants and the rate at which women contract diseases such as scleroderma, rheumatoid arthritis, and lupus. As PBS's *Frontline* summed up the data, "Women with implants do not have measurably different health from women without implants." Millions of women were badly scared, it seems, for nothing. As Gilda Radner used to say, "Never mind."

Science on Trial: The Clash of Medical Evidence and the Law in the Breast Implant Case, by Marcia Angell, MD (Norton, 256 pp., $27.50)

In a rational world this news would have been followed first by a huge sigh of relief, then by a round of apologies, and soon thereafter by some quiet retirements from public life. First to apologize would be the trial lawyers who stoked the panic at every stage, recruited tens of thousands of anxious women (1-800-RUPTURE was one hotline), filed lawsuits on their behalf that often shared the same typos, bankrupted formerly healthy Dow Corning, and pocketed millions in contingency fees from the resulting jury awards.

Next in line to offer regrets would be various figures manipulated wittingly or not by the lawyers. Connie Chung, who touched off the big panic in a 1990 CBS news show, would send a producer to accept a Golden Oops statuette. Food and Drug chief Dr. David Kessler would quit after squirming before a congressional committee probing his decision to order the devices banned. Public Citizen, the Ralph Nader operation that sedulously spread the scare, would shamefacedly halt its sale of implant-litigation kits to trial lawyers and disband its clearinghouse for implant law firms; and its spokesman, Dr. Sidney Wolfe, would find his card tossed from many a press Rolodex.

Of course this is America in the 1990s, so none of this happened. The lawyers and Public Citizen simply denied everything; Dr. Kessler dodged; Miss Chung's producers had long since moved on to other projects. Studies or no studies, some juries—enough to keep the game highly profitable—go right on

Mr. Olson is a fellow at the Manhattan Institute. His book The Excuse Factory, *on employment and discrimination law, will be published early next year by Free Press.*

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awarding damages; one in Nevada awarded $14 million.

As executive editor of the nation's leading medical journal, the *New England Journal of Medicine*, Dr. Marcia Angell published the pioneering Mayo Clinic study finding no link to disease. "Almost immediately," she relates, "I received phone calls from reporters who had spoken with plaintiffs' attorneys eager to discredit the Mayo Clinic, the *New England Journal of Medicine*, and me personally." Soon the lawyers were aiming punishing subpoenas at her and at Mayo's Dr. Sherine Gabriel.

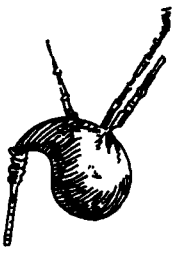
Bad move. Provoked, Dr. Angell has now written a damning book about the whole implant scandal, on top of the damning journalistic exposés that have been running lately in places like the

Millions of women were badly scared, it seems, for nothing

New York Times, *Fortune*, *Discover*, *Reason*, and the editorial (but not news) side of the *Wall Street Journal*.

Dr. Angell writes with quiet authority on the medical issues, detailing the lawyers' retreat "bunker by bunker" to claims quite different from those they made at first. She notes that while studies based on health records before the panic indicate zero effect, those drawn from later records are inevitably skewed by the panic itself toward finding the publicized (self-reported) symptoms; lawyers have seized on this effect hoping to keep the debate open. Dr. Angell also disposes of the claim, much bruited about in letters to the editor, that the researchers forgot to check for new patterns of "atypical" auto-immune or connective-tissue illness.

Though Dr. Angell strives for a sober and analytic tone, human drama keeps nosing in. A Texas woman doesn't believe herself ill but says "my family will kill me" if she doesn't file a claim. Dr. Angell blasts "blatantly unethical" members of her own profession who assist the lawyers by running diagnosis mills. One Texas doctor makes $2 million a year certifying illness in implant recipients, more than 90 per cent of whom come in as lawyer referrals. A diagnosis in hand "is of great value to your claim," his brochure explains; "the manufacturers (and frankly, jurors) value a woman's case much lower" without one. Other doctors proceed to "unnecessary, costly, and sometimes risky treatments" such as dosing patients with steroids; one woman was put through $90,000 of hospitalization and $10,000 a month in therapy.



Before the studies came out several manufacturers had agreed to settle for a numbing $4 billion, including $1 billion in fees for the lawyers. The terms were generous: for example, as Dr. Angell notes, "a woman could claim joint and muscle aches, disturbed sleep, fatigue, and burning pain in the chest, none of which can be objectively verified by her doctor or anyone else, and collect up to $700,000." Lawyers surprised even themselves by recruiting hundreds of thousands of women claiming compensable illnesses, and the $4-billion deal collapsed as too *low*.

New to the subject of lawsuit reform though she may be, Dr. Angell offers generally excellent proposals, emphasizing rules that would exclude unreliable expert testimony—"junk science"—from court proceedings. (Trial lawyers have fought such rules, with help from Harvard's Laurence Tribe and some other academics.) Though silent on loser-pays, she puts her finger on our sore lack of ways to bring lawyers' incentives into line with society's. Other businesses tempted to violate ethical rules, she notes, risk losing customers and getting into trouble with the law. "Plaintiffs' attorneys are not similarly restrained. Their clients gain right along with them, and they are not only acting within the law, but using it as an instrument." Perhaps contingency fees "should be forbidden in this country, as they are elsewhere."

In an arresting passage, Dr. Angell writes of how she views herself as a feminist and "liberal Democrat . . . quick to see the iniquities of large corporations. I disclose my political philosophy here, because it did not serve me well in examining the breast-implant controversy. The facts were simply not as I expected they would be." But "my most fundamental belief is that one should follow the evidence wherever it leads." Whether silicone causes disease "is not ultimately a matter of opinion or legal argument; it is a matter of biological fact."

Capitol Hill bully John Dingell finally ran aground when he began casually defaming the respected liberal scientist David Baltimore. Let's hope this book marks a similar turning point. □

Existence Bites

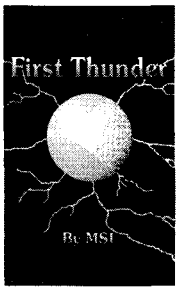
JAMES BOWMAN

THE existential hero—son of the anti-hero, great-grandson of the Byronic hero—is a guy. Obviously. Meursault wouldn't work as a woman. Nor Frederick Henry. Nor Childe Harold. They still retain a whiff of that masculine aroma associated with Beowulf and Roland and those far-off days when there were heroes *tout court*. Yet I, for one, am not entirely sorry to see that old roué, the romantic hero, finally getting a much-needed sex-change operation in the novels of Joan Didion. Her latest, and her first in 12 years, presents us with an unmistakable existential heroine. She is perhaps more

The Last Thing He Wanted, by Joan Didion (Knopf, 323 pp., $23)

Mr. Bowman is American Editor of the Times Literary Supplement.

Ascension!



The book ***First Thunder*** describes a teaching which is changing our present world. It is based on the ancient wisdom of the Ishayas, a hidden order of monks for Christ. This teaching, called Ascension, tells how to "rise beyond" stress and self-defeating beliefs, and experience life in the Here and Now. **This teaching is simple, powerful and is changing lives!** If you are interested in more information, contact:

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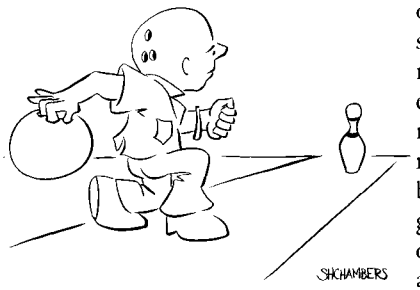
passive, less defiant, more the helpless victim of the quasi-cosmic forces she contends with than her male counterpart used to be, but she is recognizably his sister.

Her name is Elena McMahon. She is the daughter of Dick McMahon, a semi-retired gun-runner with shadowy connections to most of the covert operations being run by the U.S. Government and its agents in Central America and the Caribbean during the 1980s. It is June 1984, and Dick McMahon has finally slipped into terminal senility—just as, riding on the boom of Iran–Contra, he has put together a million-dollar deal to supply anti-personnel mines to the Contras. Since her father is unable to make the delivery and receive the payment, Elena goes in his place. Why she should have agreed to do this is never made clear. We are told by "the not quite omniscient author" that it wasn't for the money. We are told by the same author, in a long, defensive passage, that such questions of motivation and other footling writerly details do not interest her.

Fair enough. We don't know why Meursault killed the Arab either. But there are too many other things we don't know. The existential heroine, always at the end of her tether, walks out on a marriage and a job, also for no apparent reason. And the disconnectedness in her life is reflected in the trademark Didion style, suggestive of barely suppressed hysteria.



Short sentences.

Short paragraphs.

Repeated lines from telephone messages or casual remarks or overheard conversations.

This mantra-like repetition of the tag ends of dialogue—repetition that is meant to seem significant but whose significance remains obscure—is part of the general atmosphere of paranoia. She knows there is a hidden, ironic meaning in these innocent-sounding phrases, she's just not yet sure what it is.

And we're not yet sure if "she" is Elena or Joan Didion.

Elena receives two telephone-answering-machine messages, from her daughter and her father, on the same day, which become a kind of leitmotif of the book.

> "We had a real life and now we don't and just because I'm your daughter I'm supposed to like it and I don't."
>
> "Pardon my using your time but I've been trying to call your mother and that a—— she lives with refuses to put her on the line."

That Elena's mother is dead lends a certain piquancy to the latter, besides tipping her off that the old man is ga-ga. And a teenager's talking about "a real life" suggests rich ironies which are not quite explored. But whatever significance both these run-on sentences may originally have had is squeezed out of them rather than accentuated by their frequent repetition. The resonance they gather by being repeated suggests something quite other, something vast and unknown.

I, for one, am not entirely sorry to see that old roué, the romantic hero, finally getting a much-needed sex-change operation

As the shrinks say, just because you're paranoid, it doesn't mean your enemies are not conspiring against you. You have to make assumptions in life, and the assumption that sinister forces threaten you is, paradoxically, one of the safer ones to make. It means that they won't surprise you, at any rate. Miss Didion's strength, if you can call it that, is that she knows how many assumptions there are in her view of the world. She rather glories in the absence of hard information. Especially of information coming out of the government:

> There are the published transcripts of the hearings before the select committee, ten volumes, two-thousand-five-hundred-and-seven pages, sixty-three days of testimony arresting not only for its reliance on hydraulic imagery (there were the conduits, there was the pipeline, there was of course the diversion) but for its collateral glimpses of life on the far frontiers of the Monroe Doctrine. There was for example the airline that operated out of St. Lucia . . . and either was or was not (conflicting testimony on this) 99 per cent owned by a former Sky West flight attendant who either did or did not live on St. Lucia. There was for example the team of unidentified men . . . who either did or did not (more conflicting testimony) arrive on the northern Costa Rican border to burn the bodies of the crew of the unmarked DC-3 that at the time it crashed appeared to be registered to the airline that was or was not 99 per cent owned by the former Air West [*sic*] flight attendant who did or did not live on St. Lucia.

Needless to say, this is the last we hear of the airline and the flight attendant and the ill-fated DC-3. To the paranoiac, the fact that you don't know things is itself evidence that the things you don't know are threatening.

So Joan Didion's narrator's calling herself "the not quite omniscient author" is her little joke. The author here is so far from being omniscient that what she doesn't know would fill a book. Unfortunately for readers with traditional expectations of storytelling, it is not this book. Miss Didion's authorial home is in the lacunae of knowledge which the secretiveness and corruption and sheer size of imperial government inevitably create. A person could get lost in these gaps.

A person could get caught.

Elena McMahon gets caught.

Set up would be a better term. Set up by whom or why we never find out either. But she is set up to take the fall for an assassination attempt which is to serve as the excuse for a coup on an unnamed Caribbean island on one of those "far frontiers of the Monroe Doctrine." She is pure victim. She doesn't know what hit her.

Neither do we.

But it is not just this fatal ignorance which makes her into an existential heroine. It is the way she seeks out its dangers. Not only does she agree to take part in her father's dangerous deal, she refuses to get out of it while she still could.

"She knew how to cut and run.

"She had done it enough.

"Cut and run, cut her losses, just walked away."

Now she stays, perhaps, for the same reason that once she ran. For, like her CIA lover, Treat Morrison (who is the best-developed character in the book, though he has only a minor if essential part in the action), she's a "crisis junkie"

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who's "in this for the buzz." Only in her case, the buzz is not an end in itself but the means to an end, the means to keeping the "focus" or "momentum," which are the two things (or maybe they are one thing) she is most afraid of losing. As always, she is skirting round the edges of a kind of madness and personal disintegration for which the sinister projection of imperial American power in the Caribbean begins to seem only a metaphor. "The point is that Elena remained remote most of all to herself, a clandestine agent who had so successfully compartmentalized her operation as to have lost access to her own cut-outs."

It seems to me a bit of a cop-out to say that Elena's remoteness is really the point.

Joan Didion made her up, Joan Didion should finish the job.

She should tell the rest of the story.

She should not make us read her novel twice to figure out as much of the story as she does tell us.

But it is hard not to. □

FILM

Lives of the Artists

JOHN SIMON

IT is not easy to convey on film an artist at work, especially in the nonvisual arts. But even a painter at the easel invites all kinds of cinematic clichés and possibly inevitable but trivializing shortcuts. Most nearly successful, to my knowledge, was Peter Watkins with his *Edvard Munch* (1975), Ken Russell coming a not very close second with *Savage Messiah* (1972), about the sculptor Gaudier-Brzeska. We now have two new attempts at artists' lives, neither of them serious competition to a latter-day Giorgio Vasari.

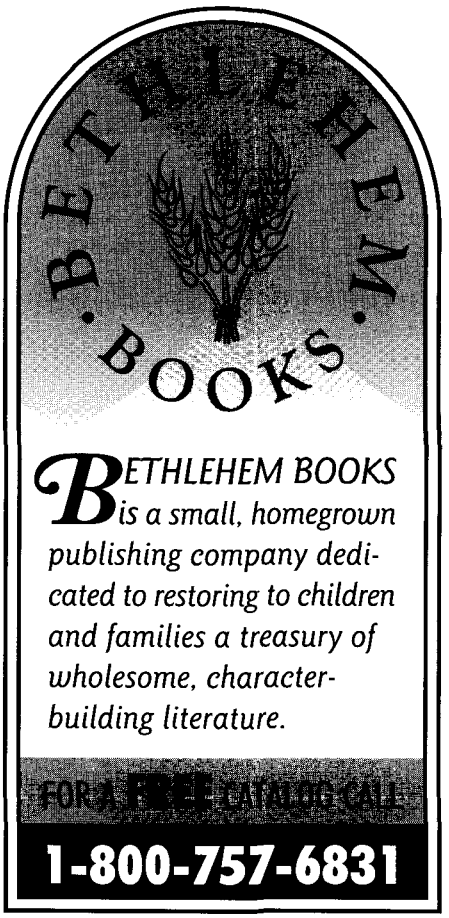
First, the Merchant–Ivory production ***Surviving Picasso***. This purports to be the story of the ten years Françoise Gilot, a young art student, spent as the mistress of Pablo Picasso, in his mid sixties when they met. Making this story was a doomed enterprise from the start. Mme Gilot, the mother of two illegitimate children by the painter—Claude and Paloma—has written her own memoir, which Merchant–Ivory were unable to acquire. Instead, they bought Arianna Stassinopoulos Huffington's trashy and suspect *Picasso: Creator and Destroyer*, drubbed by all serious Picasso scholars at the time of publication. Mme Gilot has expressed her disapproval of the movie, even though she is presented in it in a goldenly flattering light.

Mr. Simon is NR's film critic.

On the Picasso side, Claude refused permission to use any of his father's paintings, supposedly because he is planning a Picasso film himself. Whatever the reason, the absence of genuine Picassos is a serious drawback, since much can be inferred about the artist's relationships from the way he painted the women in question. The fake Picassos have been described by William Rubin, former director of the Museum of Modern Art's department of paintings and sculpture, as "so laughably bad that they undercut Anthony Hopkins's fine efforts [in the lead]."

Those fine efforts, I'm afraid, undercut themselves without any outside help. Hopkins, who has lately become too big for anybody's breeches, mugs and hams his way through the part, and achieves genuine humanity only in a scene where he abjectly cowers in a corner. Indeed, *Surviving Picasso* seems to be mostly about Picasso's hair. As the movie shuttles back and forth in time, we see that hair waxing and waning, sometimes greyer or browner, combed this way or that to conceal its thinness. Here the accuracy struck me as stunning. Clearly, no research or cost was spared to get that hair right, even at the expense of attention to other equally important aspects. Well, actually, Picasso's clothes, too, were reconstituted with rigorous solicitude.

Otherwise, though, the film is a banal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love story, superficially and cornily told in the best Merchant–Ivory manner. Natascha McElhone, as Françoise ("Gilot" is conspicuously avoided—something that Mme Gilot apparently demanded), is pretty and acts well enough, but makes this intelligent woman and not untalented painter seem rather too average. Hopkins's Pablo speaks with the actor's own British accent, but with a prestissimo delivery, perhaps meant to convey Hispanic volubility but, if so, unsuccessful. Other Picasso women are dutifully there, each allowed only one master characteristic, like figures in a puppet play. Because of Dora Maar's flamboyance, Julianne Moore has the best of it, and scores.

Instead, Merchant–Ivory bought Arianna Huffington's trashy and suspect Picasso: Creator and Destroyer, *drubbed by all serious Picasso scholars at the time of publication*

Jane Lapotaire, as the ex-ballerina first wife, plays pushiness with a thick Russian accent; Susannah Harker, as Marie-Thérèse, plays vapid subservience with a streak of self-satisfaction; Diane Venora does Jacqueline as soft-spoken awe with a touch of repressed turmoil. The faithful factotum Sabartes, allowed one long self-revelatory speech, does become something in Peter Eyre's capable hands. But the excellent Bob Peck, as Françoise's father, is straight fairy-tale wicked stepmother, just as the wonderful Joan Plowright, as Françoise's good granny, is the ultimate fairy godmother.

As usual, James Ivory directed from Ruth Prawer Jhabvala's script. These two old *routiniers* have by now achieved a certain slickness and fluency, but without the spark of inspiration that makes the whole world kin. Tony Pierce-Roberts is again the savvy cinematographer, Luciana Arrighi the flawless production designer, and Richard Robbins the cheery composer. But it all has that by-the-numbers feel, not least in the obligatory nude and copulation scenes.

As I said, all sorts of things are short-changed. The great art dealer Kahnweiler (I met him once), for instance, though well acted by Joseph Maher, is nothing like his prototype. And what kind of film would pretend that with Mme Gilot's departure after ten years the story ended, when in fact there was much more of interest left over? Picasso's Geneviève (Laporte), in her *Sunshine at Midnight*, quotes the poet Paul Eluard: "What, for example, is the truth about the relationship between Picasso and Françoise Gilot? We have no idea." That seems to have been the filmmakers' problem, too.

■ ***Basquiat*** is Julian Schnabel's "biopic" about his fellow artist Jean-Michel Basquiat, the Haitian graffiti-maker turned acclaimed painter and drug addict, who died of needle-transmitted AIDS at age 27. Schnabel, who knew but was disliked by Basquiat, is, of course, expert on the downtown-Manhattan art-gallery scene, and does very well by atmosphere, but much less well by everything else. Basquiat's relationship to his protective but eventually institutionalized mother is passably conveyed; not so that to his respectably bourgeois father. The affairs with a couple of white women are treated schematically; the friendships with men ring somewhat truer. The character based on Schnabel, and played by Gary Oldman, is rather idealized; others are viewed more soberly. Regrettably, all the alleged Basquiat paintings are by Schnabel.

The greatest lack is that of continuity: several scenes make tolerable vignettes, but the through-line remains fuzzy. This is no fault of Jeremy Wright, who, as Basquiat, gives a thoroughly rounded performance. Some good actors overact ferociously, in particular Christopher Walken as an interviewer, and Michael Wincott as a poet, friend, and promoter. Tatum O'Neal makes Ethel Scull, the collector, even cruder than probably necessary. Courtney Love, playing a character rather like herself, flubs even that. On the other hand, Willem Dafoe is good as a philosophical electrician, Benicio del Toro is astute as a pragmatic friend, and David Bowie is rather too good as Andy Warhol, making him far more interesting than he was. As a waitress-turned-girlfriend, Claire Forlani is sweet and touching, but Dennis Hopper, as the German-accented art dealer Bruno Bischofsberger, is as disastrous as his German accent.

Most offensive is the recurrent shot of surf and surfer that appears periodically above New York's rooftops. Meant, I suppose, to convey Basquiat's vision of lost paradise, its smell of cliché soon becomes pervasive. A protracted scene with Schnabel's real-life parents—a discussion of whether a certain town is in New York or New Jersey—is likewise gratuitous and grating. But a scene such as the one in which Basquiat improves one of Warhol's paintings much to Warhol's delight is amusing, as are other bits partaking of gossip or scandal value.

Basquiat does not belong in the annals of filmmaking, but, as shot by Ron Fortunato, it earns its place in a Baedeker to the downtown artists', and pseudo-artists', scene. □

DELECTATIONS

Just as Good?

LINDA BRIDGES

IT used to be money, now it's fat grams, and it has always been time—the ground for the "just as good" syndrome. Thirty years ago the commercials were for margarine ("Tastes just like butter, for half the price") and for store-bought pastries ("Just like homemade"). Now they're for everything from fat-free pretzels (which always *were* fat-free, only now

Miss Bridges, NR's managing editor, is co-author, with Wm. F. Rickenbacker, of The Art of Persuasion.

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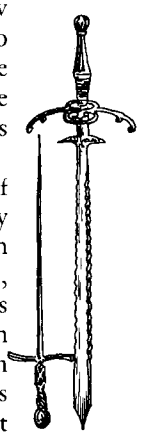
they can boast about it) to fat-free potato chips to (an oxymoron if ever there was one) fat-free sour cream, and for microwavable dinners ("Gourmet meals in minutes"). James Burnham—philosopher, polemicist, *NR* founding editor, and occasional cook—made the answer one of his laws: "Just as good, isn't."

Like most laws, though, this one can be misunderstood and misapplied. As it is by the home cooks who are very proud of not accepting inferior substitutes, but forget to ask: Good for *what*? What am I going to use the ingredient for, and what qualities does that dish need?

I think of the woman in the supermarket, instructing her nearly grown daughter on cuts of meat. "That looks good," said the girl, pointing to a beautiful thick chuck roast. "Hmph! I feed that to the dogs," said mama, who evidently knew nothing of the joys of properly braised beef, a specialty of my mother's own. I trust that woman didn't try to make beef stew out of filet mignon—but then again, she no doubt also looked down upon stew. Less excusable—because as a craftsman he had a duty to be knowledgeable—was the butcher who, upon being asked for pork stew meat, persuaded me that meat cut from the loin would be miles better than what I was used to. Leaving aside the exorbitant price, it wasn't. Loin is simply too tender to stand up to long cooking. I didn't try pork stew again until I found a butcher who got the entire carcass from the wholesale market, instead of the "choice cuts" sealed in packets somewhere in Iowa.



The disdain for "lesser" cuts of meat has been exacerbated now by health concerns—if you want a dish that's just about pure cholesterol, try fried brains—but surely it stems initially from squeamishness. When most people were still on the farm or not far removed from it, it was pretty hard to blink the fact that the piece of meat on your plate had been a part of a living animal. But once the great majority of people were living in cities or suburbs—and especially once the majority of *them* were shopping not from a butcher but from a supermarket, where the meat was already neatly cut and wrapped in cellophane, and the shopper never had to see a whole carcass being broken up—it became much easier to ignore the connections. Ground beef, even a steak or a roast, looks like meat. But move in toward the center of the torso or out toward the extremities, and things start looking like what they were on the animal; a heart looks like a heart, an ox-tail like a tail, pig's feet like hooves.

The misapplication of "Just as good, isn't," goes for fruits and vegetables too, and indeed for practically anything else you can use in cooking. (Trying to use fine, delicate cake flour to make pasta or bread would result not in superior pasta or bread, but in disaster.) The wonderful Trentacoste brothers—who until their retirement ran a grocery store in Manhattan that had not changed materially from the way their father had set it up before they were born in the first decade of this century—were sticklers on this point. Asked for mushrooms, or tomatoes, or turnips, their first question—truculently if it was Tony behind the counter, kindly if it was Charlie—would be, "What are you going to use it for?" I was too timid to shoot back, "What do *you* care?" If I had so replied, I would have got the answer that was eventually given more chattily, once we had come to know each other: If you want to flute mushrooms to garnish a steak, they have to be perfect. If you're slicing or quartering them into a stew, or chopping them for duxelles, they can have blemishes, which you'll cut out, and we'll charge you less for the blemished ones. The same goes double for tomatoes, since so often the ripest, richest tomatoes will have a bruise or an insect bite somewhere, or will have a gnarly, lined top. Unless the appearance really matters—say, for broiled tomato halves, or tomatoes stuffed with tuna—there is no reason on earth to reject a tomato because of blemishes.

The search for inappropriate levels of quality is in part a reaction to nasty tricks played on an uninformed public

Of course, the search for inappropriate levels of quality is in part a reaction

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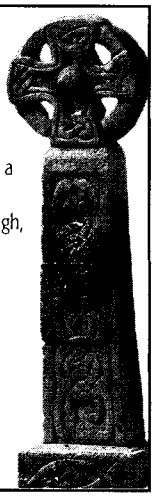

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to some nasty tricks played on an uninformed public in the past. When the interest in European cuisines first spread among a wide audience after the war, thanks to Clémentine and *Mastering the Art of French Cooking* and early James Beard, some enterprising winemakers started selling "cooking wine" and, worse yet, "cooking sherry." The next round of cookbooks and magazine articles had to point out, with greater or lesser degrees of asperity depending on the writer's temperament, that there is no such thing as "cooking wine": there is wine that is fit to drink and wine that is not. As Michael Field patiently explained, when anything containing alcohol is used in cooking, the alcohol is cooked away, and it is only the flavor that remains; so if the flavor is poor or downright offensive, the dish will be worse than if it contained no wine or spirits at all. But on the other hand, it would be worse than unnecessary, it would be seriously wasteful, to use a *premier grand cru* in cooking even if one were as rich as a Greek shipowner's son. Serve the great wine by all means if you can afford it, but don't use it in the *boeuf bourguignonne*.

When it comes to modern health consciousness, we see the just-as-good syndrome in its straight-up form—but we also see people making informed accommodations. And one man's culinary death sentence is another's sensible trade-off. Jack, who loves his thick, juicy steaks, will pay for them by substituting 8-calorie-a-serving frozen yogurt for ice cream. Christine, known among Los Angeles restaurateurs as the lady with the hats and two desserts, will eat the barest of broiled fish and butterless vegetables in order to leave herself free for her favorite course. This kind of freedom of choice may be hard to explain to a Frenchman (Paul Bocuse has been uncompromising in his strictures on such trade-offs) but it is, or should be, the American way. □

BOOKS IN BRIEF

On the Brink: The Dramatic, Behind-the-Scenes Saga of the Reagan Era and the Men and Women Who Won the Cold War, by Jay Winik (Simon & Schuster, 672 pp., $30)

JAY Winik has written a magnificent book: a thorough, stylish account of how President Reagan brought the Cold War to an end. Obviously there is no single explanation for any historical event: a variety of personalities, circumstances, and situations contributed to the great event under discussion here. Thus the debate as to how and why the Cold War was won will continue to rage, especially among liberals, who, as Winik demonstrates, deserve little in the way of congratulations. Nixon's policy of détente did not help, either. Certainly we can argue that corruption and decadence among the Soviet leadership were contributing factors. But the fall of the Soviet Union could have taken place ten or twenty years from now. Why did it happen when it did? Winik gives proper credit to the brilliant team that advised President Reagan: notably Caspar Weinberger, Richard Perle, and Jeane Kirkpatrick. But after all it was the President who chose his advisors, and the President's contribution extended far beyond simply hiring great minds. The importance of Winik's book lies in his clear identification of Reagan as the central actor in the initiation and planning of the policies that led most directly to the victory over Soviet Communism. —AMOS PERLMUTTER

Fighting for Life, by Robert P. Casey (Word, 255 pp., $21.99)

THE title of this autobiography by Robert Casey, Democratic former governor of Pennsylvania, is a *triple entendre*. Casey is perhaps best known as a courageous political fighter for the lives of unborn children. In his 1990 re-election campaign, he said that he would sign legislation banning all abortions except those necessary to save the life of the mother—and he beat his pro-choice Republican opponent by the biggest margin in Pennsylvania history. Casey's campaign manager, James Carville, said afterward, "If Bob Casey was a pro-choice Episcopalian, he'd be on the cover of *Time* magazine." In fact, neither Carville nor his new boss, another Democratic former governor, prevented Casey's exclusion from the speaker's roster at the 1992 Democratic national convention. As Casey aptly says, there *was* an intolerant convention in 1992, but it was not the one Pat Buchanan addressed. Second, Casey has fought for his political life. His first three tries for governor were unsuccessful. Known therefore as "the three-time loss from Holy Cross" (the college he attended on a basketball scholarship), Casey finally won, against long odds, in 1986. Casey is also a medical miracle. His personal fight for life began in the spring of 1993 when he underwent a rare heart and liver transplant. The story of this operation and Casey's recovery occupies much of *Fighting*. The medical story is gripping enough. Even more moving is Casey's account of his donor, Michael Lucas, a black, unemployed son of a deceased steel worker and the remarkable woman who, while grieving the loss of a *second* son to murder, consented to the transplant. Lucas was beaten to death by drug dealers looking for stolen property, in a case of entirely mistaken identity. Casey tells these remarkable stories in prose—plain, direct, moved by conviction—that reflects the author himself. Think of another tall, thin, plain-speaking, absolutely honest, decent Pennsylvanian—Jimmy Stewart, or at least the roles he played—and you will know what I mean. —GERARD V. BRADLEY

Red Scare or Red Menace? American Communism and Anti-Communism in the Cold War Era, by John E. Haynes (Ivan R. Dee, 224 pp., $24.95)

THIS lively, concise, and well-researched primer covers both old ground and new. Using newly declassified Soviet documents, Haynes revisits most of the major cases of the Cold War era and evenhandedly maps out the considerable extent to which Communists infiltrated the American government, labor movement, and cultural scene. Haynes stresses certain ironies that are usually forgotten or ignored. For example, he notes that anti-Communism, far from being an exclusively right-wing phenomenon, enjoyed support even among socialists. And he shows how many of the tactics used against Communists in the Cold War era had been used by them in the Thirties as a means of discrediting fascist sympathizers. "For all its sporadic ugliness, excesses, and silliness, the anti-Communism of the 1940s and 1950s was an understandable and rational response to a real danger to American democracy," he concludes.

—NICK GILLESPIE

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BOWMAN
(Continued from page 28)

a while, even the heckler was silenced. Two of the testimonials came from men living with HIV or AIDS. Two more, one male and one female, had even had sex change operations and then had had themselves changed back. At the end of his testimony, the pudgy, crew cut, bespectacled ex-woman held up a photo of his former self and invited us to contrast the glamorous bombshell of his youth with the dreary middle age before our eyes.

As Jane Boyer, a pretty but delicate-looking woman, was explaining how she had been delivered from lesbianism by learning that "Jesus was a man I could trust," the heckler finally piped up and loudly explained to this gathering of converted homosexuals that it was impossible for them to have been converted, since homosexuality was genetic. A brief scientific discussion ensued which demonstrated only that the politicization of homosexuality has left us with no middle ground, no chance to feel both for the dead and for the converted, and definitely no chance to hate the sin while loving the sinner. Anyone who harbors the smallest doubt that some people are required by the laws of God and nature to engage in acts of coital stimulation with members of their own sex might as well be out there with that tiny band of counter-demonstrators I saw during the Candlelight March, who held up signs reading: "God Hates Fags" and "Save the Gerbils."

In the lobby of the hotel where the PLFAG conference was taking place, there were rows and rows of merchants selling T-shirts and mugs and tote bags and buttons ("I ♥ my non-gay parents," "Hate is not a family value," "Better Blatant than Latent"). You could buy a baby's shirt inscribed: "I love my two mommies." Among the other moneylenders in the temple was Lambda Books, the lesbian and gay booksellers, whose table groaned under the weight of the newest literature on homosexual life and thought. "Win a free Gay and Lesbian library worth $1,000" a sign advertised. I thought of the pathetic little gathering of reformed homosexuals I had attended that morning, with its folding chairs and its signs blowing over. One of them had held up four or five slim paperbacks which explained the traditional Christian view of homosexuality. If this is war, it is obvious which side has the big guns. □

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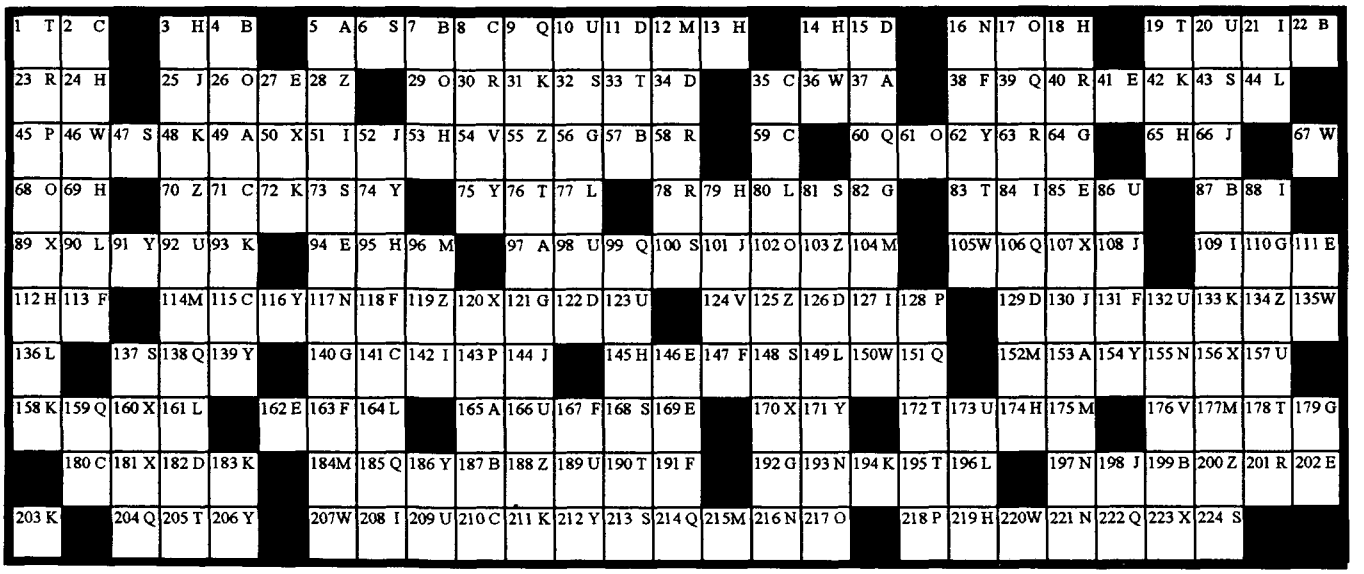
TRANS-O-GRAM / Siegfried R. Reiner



DEFINITIONS

A. This laurel Apollo never won — 5 97 165 153 49 37

B. Term for catch-all legislation — 57 7 187 22 199 87 4

C. French nobleman indispensable to American independence — 71 115 210 59 180 141 2 35 8

D. Jealous — 122 34 126 11 15 182 129

E. Escapade — 27 94 111 146 41 162 202 169 85

F. Mississippi lobster — 38 113 147 167 131 118 191 163

G. Baptize — 121 179 82 56 64 192 110 140

H. Huckstering for votes — 69 145 112 219 14 3 65 24 79 18 53

I. Forfends — 95 174 13 88 84 127 142 208 109 21 51

J. Not like Clinton testimony — 52 144 130 25 101 66 198 108

K. High-strung red hound (2 words) — 72 93 48 211 158 203 133 42 31 194 183

L. Like a mother's work (2 words) — 44 164 80 161 196 136 77 149 90

M. Lightheadedness — 104 177 96 175 215 12 184 152 114

N. Lightning's companion — 16 193 155 216 197 221 117

O. Slick Willie's answer to NARAL's "jump!" (2 words) — 26 61 29 17 102 217 68

P. Salient Perot feature — 143 45 128 218

Q. West Point's rival (2 words) — 138 9 214 185 39 204 60 159 151 106 222 99

R. Stuff of the editorial pages — 23 63 40 58 30 201 78

S. Calcutta's Angel of Mercy (2 words) — 47 43 100 32 6 213 73 81 148 168 224 137

T. Organizational backstabbing — 33 19 172 1 190 76 178 195 205 83

U. Canada's easternmost province — 98 92 86 132 166 173 189 157 209 20 10 123

V. Beard (as of wheat or rye) — 54 176 124

W. Flailed, so as to remove def. V. — 67 36 105 135 207 220 150 46

X. Sacrosanct — 50 89 160 120 181 156 107 170 223

Y. Like Delhi streets — 171 91 74 62 116 186 154 75 206 212 139

Z. Akhenaten's fabled consort — 103 125 119 70 134 28 200 55 188

Solution to last issue's Trans-O-Gram. FRANCIS CANAVAN: *Debating Abortion*: "Positive law is not simply a restatement of a moral principle. Nor is law merely the translation of a moral principle into a legally binding command or prohibition. Politicians, therefore, should not be accused of betraying the principle if they stop short of its full reach in the laws they enact or enforce."

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ON THE RIGHT / Wm. F. Buckley Jr.

Suppose Everything They Say Is Correct . . .

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 18

The people called in to participate in the town hall featuring President Clinton and Sen. Dole were "undecided." Let us assume that they accepted as factually true what the two contenders said, to the extent that the claims are subject to verification.

The economy. Clinton tells us that 1) jobs are up, 2) inflation is relatively stable, 3) exports have increased, 4) manufacturing jobs are up, 5) gross national product is up, 6) the deficit has gone down.

So what's the matter with that, Mabel?

On health, Clinton told us that a million more children are receiving benefits than had previously got them, that insurance is now portable from job to job, that he has his sight on another 2.2 million to draw in from the uninsured, and that continued Medicare by his schedule will keep open seven hundred hospitals that otherwise would close.

Not bad, the audience acknowledges.

Crime? First big downswing in many years. The result of Clinton's crime bill and anti-terrorism bill.

National morale? People are better off than they were in 1992 ("If you don't think so, vote for Dole"). Religion? No country is more religious than our own, and nowhere is the right to practice one's religion more scrupulously guaranteed.

So what does Mr. Dole have to offer? Well, the promise of a 15 per cent tax cut. We the audience believe he is sincere, on the other hand, we the audience (we are playing strictly by the rules) believe that Mr. Clinton is sincerely concerned that if we have tax cuts on that scale, we endanger the health of the economy. We wouldn't want that.

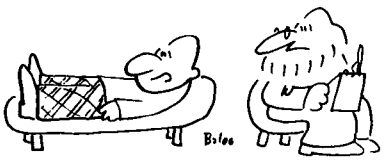
And then, the audience reflects, there is this problem: Although we believe Sen. Dole, we have to acknowledge that he appears to change his own beliefs quite regularly. He said that the economy was worse off than at any time in the last one hundred years, but then Mr. Clinton reminded us that in February, he had said that the economy was better than at any time in the last thirty years. And on other matters: We are pledged to believe that Mr. Clinton was truthful when he said that Dole voted against Medicare and against student loans and against tax cuts. But we are pledged also to believe that Candidate Dole is in favor of Medicare and student loans and tax cuts. What he didn't explain was why he changed his mind on these matters.

We'll have to think about that.

But here is the tough one. We are, by the rules, required to accept everything that both candidates said. But one of the things Mr. Dole said was that Clinton's Administration is, well, not-so-good characterwise. And he said that Clinton had promised tax reductions in 1992 when he ran, but he never came through on them. True, Clinton said that he cut taxes for 15 million people. That's a pretty good start.

And on foreign policy, Dole didn't really say anything—did he Mabel? I forget . . . But Clinton did say that in the Middle East he is doing as much as anybody can do, which is to make the principals meet with each other, listen to each other, and let the blessings of peace speak for themselves. In Bosnia, our diplomatic intervention meant that people stopped killing each other, and all we can do is be hopeful about what comes next. In Iraq, Saddam Hussein felt our sting when he went too far on the Kurdish question. And Haiti, as Vice President Gore said last week, was one of the most brilliant diplomatic acts in the century. We aren't pledged to accept the candidates' evaluations of their own conduct, just the facts. On Haiti, Clinton did restore democracy. Right.

And on trade policy, Clinton made how many—two hundred?—trade pacts. We have to be firm, and he will be firm, and that already has paid off in Japan.



"I think I'm getting subliminal messages from my Rice Krispies."

Mr. Dole said that we must stop exporting jobs. We have to credit his sincerity in thinking this. If he became President, he would try to stop exporting jobs.

So what do you say, Mabel?

—I think that if we accept everything that was said, then we vote Clinton. □

Did You Vote For Social Security?

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 8

It is difficult for an active legislator to run for President because he is always made to confront things he did not do, bills he did not vote for, in alien frames. That may be a reason why there are so few presidential candidates rising from legislative ranks. Only John Kennedy, in this century, comes to mind. When a legislator, he was frequently absent from the Senate, and he did not have the formal responsibilities that Bob Dole had as minority and then majority leader. Robert Taft was a minority leader when he ran for the Presidency in 1952. Special hostility to him derived from his sponsorship of the Taft–Hartley bill.

President Clinton was all over Sen. Dole on what he hadn't voted for or had opposed. Rather late in the hour Sen. Dole said that among the reasons he didn't vote for this or that piece of legislation was that they were embedded in pork.

But a call by Sen. Dole for a profounder perspective would have given greater satisfaction.

Did you vote for Social Security?

—Well er, no. Neither did George Washington.

That's a stupid defense. A Social Security bill wasn't presented to George Washington.

—Why not? . . . Because Social Security is a question of time and place. Safe sex is important now, but mattered much less a generation ago, when there was no AIDS.

Is that your excuse, Sen. Dole, for having voted against Medicare in 1965?

—I thought the bill was defective. Its backers projected annual costs of $12 billion by 1990. The costs in fact were $107 billion.

What about your vote against my measure to stop women from being taken out of the hospital 24 hours after giving birth?

—The Federal Government, Mr. President, ought not to be deciding the policy of hospitals. You say maybe you went too far in your health measure of

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1993? Well, in some future presidential debate, would you expect the Democratic contender to say to his opponent: You voted against Clinton's health care in 1993?

Ah, these wonderful moments, when you reflect on what might have been said. The French are so accustomed to enjoying that reflex they have a term for it: *en esprit de l'escalier*. In the spirit of the staircase. I.e., you have reached the bottom of the staircase and suddenly it occurs to you what you should have said to your mistress when she threw you out of the room. Take tobacco . . .

Sen. Dole has been misleading on the whole tobacco question, he has refused to declare it a drug, and he accepts contributions from the tobacco industry.

—Mr. President, tobacco is *legal*, there are forty million Americans who use tobacco. If you want to declare it a drug and recommend its illegalization, go ahead and do so right now. In my first State of the Union address I'll recommend to the appropriate committees of Congress that they reflect on your recommendation of October.

Not that Mr. Dole missed them all. He was quick on his feet on the AmeriCorps. What you are doing, he said, is paying out $27,000 to persuade a lot of Americans to "volunteer" for social service. Clinton did not pick up on that.

Yes, Dole was disappointing for his failure to give the greater perspective. "My mother would say, 'All I have is Medicare and Social Security, don't cut it.'" That's not quite right, is it? Mrs. Dole also had Bob Dole and two siblings, and one likes to think that sons and daughters feel a responsibility for aging mothers.

But Social Security relieves the children of that burden!

No it doesn't. Social Security is simply a passage of funds, here to there, there to here, to there, to here. The Social Security fund doesn't grow, in the sense that an investment in AT&T grows. Mrs. Dole's children are paying Social Security taxes that might in part have been reserved for Mrs. Dole—who herself paid taxes to Social Security. If the same money had been invested, she'd have been better off, living from her own resources.

In one of his dialogues, Socrates listens attentively and then says to Protagoras, Look, either we can reason together or you can show off, in which case without me, because I'll just leave. Well, poor Dole doesn't have that alternative. Nor do we. □

A Question of Character?

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 4

In anticipation of the debate, the focus was hard on the presidential contest. What surprises is the universality of comments and even jokes at the expense of Mr. Clinton. A prominent Canadian publisher was saying last summer, "Most Americans are non-ideological. When all is said and done, they're not going to vote for Clinton against Dole." But of course if that were true, why are these non-ideological voters having the pollsters on? If they are disgusted with Clinton because among other things he lies, how do they excuse their own lying to the pollsters?

Another publisher whispered the joke going the rounds, that Mr. Clinton would turn out to be the first president whose wife made his license plates. The Speaker of the House brandished a $20 bill at a private dinner hosted by Rush Limbaugh. "Here it is—that Dole will win." "Aren't you asking for odds" the taker asked. "No odds. Even money."

There is much buzz about town over the editorial in the weekly *New York Observer*, a highbrow leftist inner-New York concentrate of political and social passions. It is the creature of Arthur Carter, an engaged multi-millionaire who gets his kicks from opinion, so much so that for quite a few years he owned *The Nation* magazine, which is where the Bureau of Weights and Measures visits to define hard-left.

Well, Mr. Carter astonished his audience by running a front-page editorial in the current issue headlined "Bob Dole, the Right Choice in '96!/A Vote for Character Over Sleaze." The editorial goes through the necessary disavowals ("the religious right and the right-to-lifers are wild-eyed fanatics who threaten our hard-won liberties" to conceive children and then kill them) but quickly comes to the point. "In this election year, character is not merely one of several issues demanding our attention. It is the *only* issue. That makes our decision easier. Bob Dole has character, and Bill Clinton has none. So Bob Dole is our choice."

The cosmopolitan editor then lets loose. "We have been embarrassed for nearly four years. We have suffered too long the sins of those yahoos Mr. Clinton transported from Arkansas, so many of whom seem to have spent the entire term answering prosecutors' questions . . . Instead of a role model, we have a floozy who will consort with anyone if it means a bump in the popularity polls . . . His governing style is a product of his generation's self-indulgence and Little Rock's loose political morals. He knows nothing of sacrifice and little of the real world, for he has been talking, and talking, and talking, for the last quarter-century. Historians will one day note that in 1996, the oldest Presidential nominee in U.S. history was a man of action, while one of the youngest incumbents was a sedentary yapper . . . We used to ask our Presidents about great issues of war and peace. We ask President Clinton about his underwear. Worse, he gives us an answer . . . [Hillary is just as bad] Now we have a chance to rid ourselves of both. A perfect twofer."

In anticipation of Sunday's debate, much time was given over to advising Sen. Dole. James Carville, the Democratic strategist and overseer of Mr. Clinton's 1992 campaign, was amiable enough to give the other side some advice in *Newsweek*. He stressed the need for Bob Dole to appear as the underdog, not the loser. And he admonished him not to go after Mr. Clinton personally. "You know he's going to come back smiling. It'll only feed into the worst perceptions of you (that you're mean-spirited) and best perceptions of him (that he can take a punch)." Robert Novak advised the candidate to stress Dole's advocacy of a tax cut. The Speaker likes to point out that the average family should reflect that at the end of the first Dole year in office, it would pay $1,300 less to Internal Revenue than under Clinton one more time. The gains would be not only material but political, forcing the shrinkage of a government groaning with the bureaucratic burden.

Yes, but it isn't easy to get into the ring and draw attention to your fine character, as distinguished from the base character of your opponent. Mr. Carville, in his friendly piece, added, "Another thing: Don't mention your war wound more than twice. Understand that your injury entitles you to the gratitude and respect of the nation. But not a vote for president."

Well, we'll soon see. A lot rides on it, including twenty of Newt's dollars. □

(Universal Press Syndicate)

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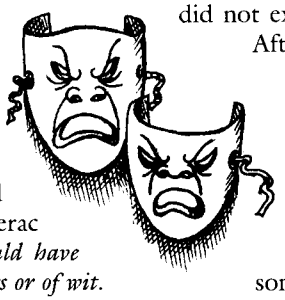
THE MISANTHROPE'S CORNER

FLORENCE KING

"YOU can pretend to be serious," wrote Sacha Guitry, "but you can't pretend to be witty." True, you can't pretend to be witty because wit is dry, subtle, lacerating, cynical, elitist, and risqué—all impossible to fake. Humor, on the other hand, is broad, soothing, positive, inclusive, and smutty—to make sure everybody gets it. Pretending to be humorous is easy and a great many people are doing it.

The "happy talk" associated with local news has now permeated the media. Network anchors are stretching and straining for jokey leads, none with more gravid insouciance than Dan Rather, whose ineffable opening statement, "President Clinton was as relaxed as a pound of liver," earned Dan the Cyrano de Bergerac Award. "*Oh, sir, what you could have said, had you some tinge of letters or of wit. But of wit you never had an atom, and of letters you need but three to write you down: a-s-s.*"



No yuk is left unturned, even in the unlikeliest places. Crime shows and violent movies, once limited to a few stoic wisecracks, now brim with constant quipping, banter, genial insults, and playful asides. This is not comic relief, which is defined as a separate scene or subplot, but comic accompaniment for murder and mayhem.

Even the print media have joined the bray. Newspaper headlines increasingly run to juvenile puns ("Katie Kicks Dole's Butt"), while ads are silent versions of the basic elements of hysteria. Models in print ads used to smile to show their pleasure in the product, but now as they gather round to exclaim over the computer or the fridge or the optician's wide selection of frames, they simulate bladder-busting laughter; heads thrown back, eyes bulging, mouths stretched into rictuses, both rows of teeth exposed all the way back to the molars. The computer isn't that funny. The user's manual is, but they're not reading it.

Americans now ache to be funny the way previous generations ached to "sit down and play the piano without notes," as matchbook ads used to promise. It was guaranteed to make you the life of the party; all you had to do was forget about being tone-deaf and send away for 12 easy lessons on how to play the piano without notes.

The hopes of today's would-be comics are just as unrealistic, but they are sustained by a powerful influence that did not exist in the matchbook era. After nearly fifty years of television, our population now contains more people who have listened to laugh tracks all their lives than people who haven't. It has trained them to laugh when somebody says something funny whether it's funny or not, and to expect every bon mot of their own to be greeted by gales of mirth whether it's bon or not.

Being funny is now part of the American Dream. You know what that means: everybody's got a "right" to be funny. Don't laugh; anything is possible in the land of liberty and penumbras for all. It would be easy in today's climate to invent agendas for outcome-based humor and comparable-worth jokes and connect it all up to self-esteem. The Norma McCorveys are ready and waiting, as an observer of life among the Yuks can testify.

A few weeks ago I was in a variety-store checkout line whose cashier was yukking it up with a desperation reminiscent of those poor souls who knock themselves out on a first date to be sure of getting a second. To a customer buying a red shirt, she caterwauled, "Better not wear this around a bull!" and then bellowed with laughter. The customer was momentarily taken aback but quickly rallied, saying gamely, "I don't know no bulls, but my husband's full of it!"

Encouraged, the cashier let loose with a hearty guffaw and stepped up her efforts. "Looks like it's curtains for you!" she told a woman buying a curtain rod. To a woman buying three paring knives she said, "Gonna cut up, huh?" Then it was my turn. I put my pancake turner on the counter and braced myself.

"Ready to flip out?"

"Any minute now."

I said it in the spirit of "Fine, thanks," a conventional rejoinder to round off the exchange and ease my escape, but the cashier heard it as a cue. Suddenly a great wheezing rumble rose up out of her and exploded in a yelp of mirth that was almost feral. Having a perfunctory comment received as devastating wit is embarrassing. I shifted feet and tried to strike a nonchalant pose while other customers peered around the gum stand to get a better look at us; one of them whispered, "What happened?"

This question is best answered in one of those upbeat human-interest segments about ordinary Americans doing extraordinary things. I imagined the cashier being interviewed while walking through a field with Charles Kuralt, explaining why she wants to turn the housewares department into a comedy barn. "Yeah, healing power," she agrees, as he prompts her gently. Then, as both pick weeds and chew on them to look sincere, she flashes her hectic grin and says, "I just want to show that everybody has a sense of humor."

IT'S not a bad idea in a time of mounting social tension and incipient civil insurrection. Like most Americans, the cashier's definition of a sense of humor is based on our national ideal of the chortling toastmaster "putting people at ease." This is how she sees herself.

She was so busy playing toreador with the red shirt that she neglected to fold it, so busy sharpening her one-liners that she dumped the knives blades-first into a plastic bag they could slice through, but good service is not what our jesters are striving for. Their object is a universal feeling of safety and security—beginning with their own—which they try to achieve by neutralizing everyone who crosses their path.

Americans are behaving like people subconsciously obeying the dictum, "Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die," but since the first two will kill you, we are pouring all of our inchoate fears into being merry. □

Miss King is the author of The Florence King Reader *and other books.*

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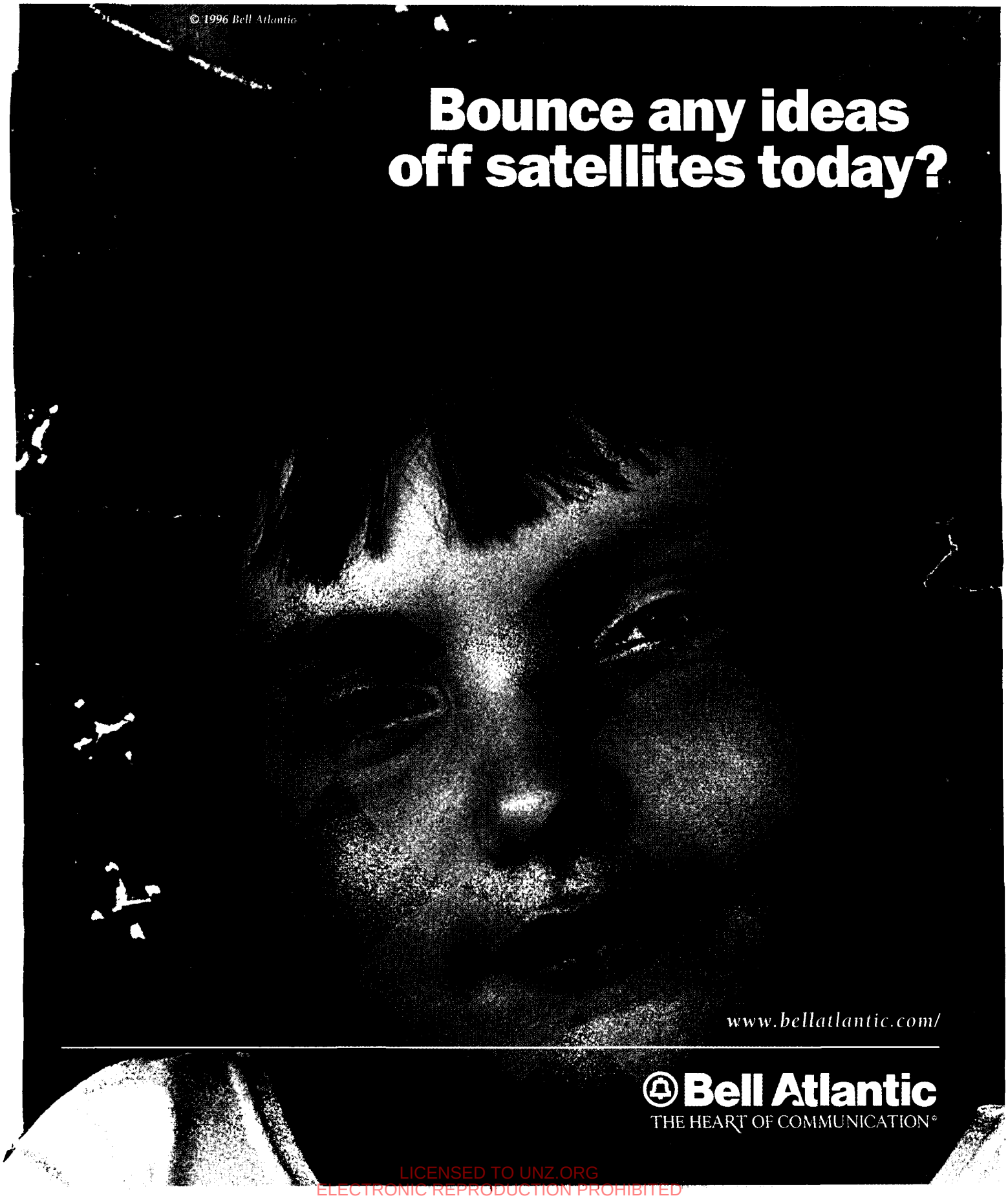

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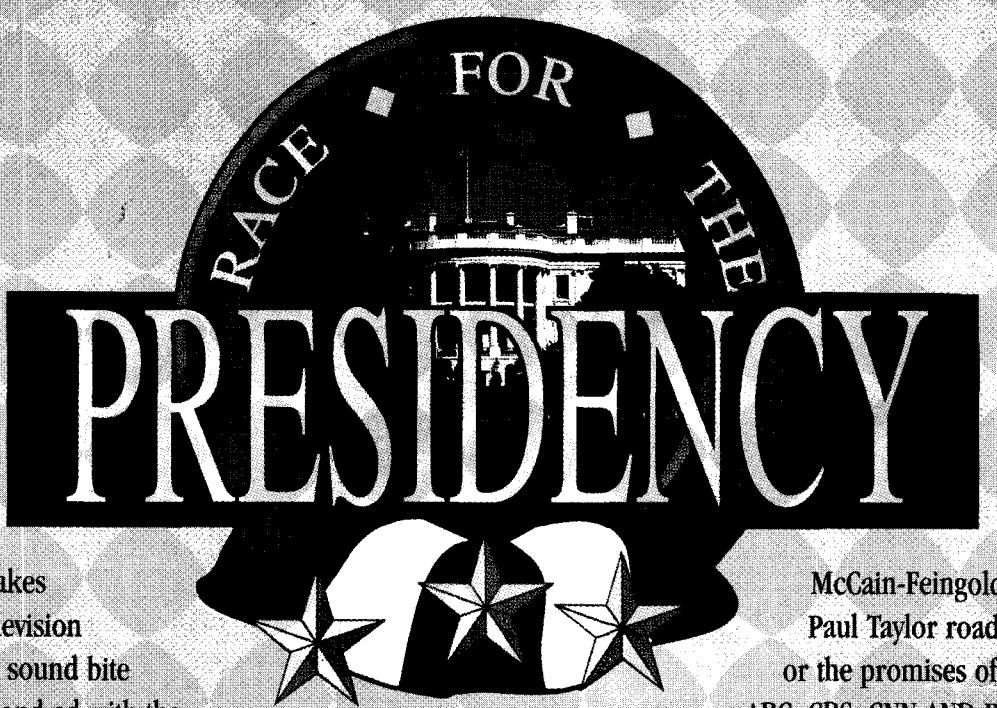

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